


Braille Monitor



MARCH, APRIL, 1981

VOICE OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND



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THE BRAILLE MONITOR

PUBLICATION OF THE
NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND

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THE BRAILLE MONITOR

PUBLISHED MONTHLY IN INKPRINT, BRAILLE, AND ON TALKING-BOOK DISCS BY
THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND

KENNETH JERNIGAN, *President*

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BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21230

LETTERS FOR THE PRESIDENT, ADDRESS CHANGES,
SUBSCRIPTION REQUESTS, AND ORDERS FOR NFB LITERATURE,
ARTICLES FOR THE MONITOR AND LETTERS TO THE EDITOR
SHOULD BE SENT TO THE NATIONAL OFFICE

* * *

MONITOR SUBSCRIPTIONS COST THE FEDERATION ABOUT FIFTEEN DOLLARS PER YEAR. MEMBERS ARE INVITED, AND NON-MEMBERS ARE REQUESTED, TO COVER THE SUBSCRIPTION COST. DONATIONS SHOULD BE MADE PAYABLE TO NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND AND SENT TO

RICHARD EDLUND, *Treasurer*
NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND
BOX 11185
KANSAS CITY, KANSAS 66111

* * *

If you or a friend would like to remember the National Federation of the Blind in your will, you can do so by employing the following language:

"I give, devise, and bequeath unto National Federation of the Blind, a District of Columbia nonprofit corporation, the sum of \$____ (or "____ percent of my net estate" or "the following stocks and bonds: _____") to be used for its worthy purposes on behalf of blind persons."

* * *

THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND IS NOT AN ORGANIZATION
SPEAKING FOR THE BLIND—IT IS THE BLIND SPEAKING FOR THEMSELVES

ISSN 0006-8829

MORE AND BETTER SCHOLARSHIPS BEING OFFERED BY THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND

The National Federation of the Blind strives, in every way that it can, to promote its goals of security, equality, and opportunity for the blind. This includes the awarding of an increasing number of scholarships to blind students. Although (to some extent) all of the states fund college students through their rehabilitation agencies, some do better than others. This year, at its National Convention in Baltimore in July, the National Federation of the Blind is offering four scholarships: the Howard Brown Rickard Scholarship, \$1,200; the Charles Albert Kuchler Scholarship, \$500; and two Hermione Grant Calhoun Scholarships, each for \$2,500.

In her will Dr. Isabelle Grant left \$35,000 to the NFB as a perpetual scholarship fund. The will states: "The interest from said sum shall be used for annual scholarships for blind female students for education at the college level, said fund to be known as the Hermione Grant Calhoun Scholarship." Interest rates being what they are, two very excellent scholarships can be offered at this summer's convention. As has been said, each will be in the amount of \$2,500. To be eligible an individual must be female and must be attending (or planning to attend) a college or university.

The Howard Brown Rickard Scholarship, awarded by the National Federation of the Blind, is an annual grant of \$1,200 presented at the NFB National Convention. Only students in certain fields of study are eligible because the donor of the scholarship

wanted to encourage the blind to enter those fields. The scholarship was established by a bequest of Thomas E. Rickard in honor of his father, Howard Brown Rickard. Any legally blind university student in the professions of law, medicine, engineering, architecture, or the natural sciences, including undergraduates in these fields, is eligible to apply.

The Charles Albert Kuchler Scholarship is a scholarship created by Mrs. Kuchler in honor of her husband, who was the first blind student to graduate from Cornell University at Ithaca, New York. Mr. Kuchler was also the father of Junerose Killian, a strong member of the NFB of Connecticut. The scholarship is a \$500 grant awarded to a blind student enrolled in any field of study at Cornell.

To obtain an application form for any of these scholarships, write to the Reverend Howard E. May, RFD 2—Clint Eldridge Road, West Willington, Connecticut 06279. The deadline for applications is June 1st.

An individual must: (a) be recommended by the state affiliate of the National Federation of the Blind where he or she lives, goes to school, or is planning to go to school; and (b) attend the NFB Convention at which the scholarship is to be awarded.

Application forms are available from Reverend Howard May, at the address given above. The application must be filled out completely and returned to Reverend May by June 1, 1981.

MORE ABOUT THE NATIONAL CONVENTION IN BALTIMORE

by KENNETH JERNIGAN

Several things about this summer's convention will be different from past years, and I am writing this article to tell you about them. In the first place we are planning one of the most exciting activities we have ever had. Early Wednesday morning, July 8, we will all go down to Washington, probably by chartered train. In our thousands we will form up on the Capitol steps and speak with Congressmen and Senators. Then (if our current plan remains unchanged) we will parade to the White House and, hopefully, meet President Reagan. It will be the largest group of blind people ever to assemble in our nation's Capital. Not only should it be an exciting and interesting day but also a visible demonstration to the government and the nation that we are a force to be reckoned with, the blind on the move speaking for ourselves.

You will want to get to Baltimore early, for we will spend the day Saturday, July 4, visiting the National Center for the Blind. As you know, we own the entire city block, and all of our activities headquarter there. You will be able to see our various aids and appliances, our tape duplicating and computer operations, our office space, our meeting rooms, the JOB activities, and all of the rest. It will be the first full-fledged activity of this summer's convention. There will be good food and plenty of activity. This complex of buildings is ours. It belongs to us, to the blind of the nation. It is now completely paid for. There is no other facility like it in the country. It is unique. So come and inspect your property—property which you and the rest of us own. I know that you will feel pride in what you see.

There will be a number of changes in the convention program and procedures this year. Although the agenda is not yet finalized, most (perhaps all) of Friday, July 10,

will be taken up with resolutions and other internal business. This is necessary because of the lack of time for the discussion of resolutions we have experienced at the last two conventions. We must allow opportunity for full and thorough deliberation, and this seems the best way to do it.

Speaking of resolutions, there will be other changes. As we have grown larger and as more resolutions have been presented, some of the methods of the past are no longer workable. The Resolutions Committee will follow its usual custom of meeting at one o'clock Sunday afternoon, July 5. However, no resolution will be considered by the Committee which has not been presented in draft form to the Chairman by two o'clock Sunday afternoon. This year's Chairman will be Mr. Rami Rabby, 136 East 55th Street, #8E, New York, New York 10022. Resolutions may be mailed between now and the convention to the National Office in Baltimore or to Mr. Rabby. Of course, they may also be given to Mr. Rabby at the convention before the Committee convenes, or they may be brought to the meeting at one o'clock Sunday afternoon. Since this notice is being put in the *Monitor* and since it has been discussed on the presidential releases, it should not create any hardship for anyone. Quite the contrary. It will enable the Committee to do its work more efficiently, and it will mean that resolutions will receive more deliberation and be more carefully thought out. I emphasize that draft resolutions must be presented to the Committee in writing, not verbally.

Of course, resolutions may also come to the convention floor through the Board of Directors, and this practice will continue unchanged. However, such resolutions are the exception, not the rule. They are customarily only presented by the administra-

tion as matters of major policy so that the delegates will be able to hear and deliberate on them prior to their presentation to the convention.

There will also be a change this year with respect to drawings and raffles. Raffle tickets may not be sold in the registration area and drawings on raffles may not be done during convention sessions or at the banquet. These rules do not apply to drawings conducted by national divisions or committees. This policy is being put into effect as a result of an overwhelming sentiment expressed by the members.

This year we will probably establish a group or division for government employees, and there are many other innovations and exciting firsts which are planned. We hope to have high-ranking officials of the new Reagan administration on the program, possibly of cabinet rank. We also hope to have Senators and Congressmen at the banquet.

It should be the best and most exciting convention we have ever had, and I hope all of you will get your reservations in immediately. Remember that you will need to present proof of registration at the convention in order to get our special hotel rates of \$16.00 singles and \$21.50 for doubles and twins. Do not write or call the hotel for

reservations. For each room that is to be reserved you will need to send a deposit of \$20.00. This deposit is not refundable, but it will be applied to the payment of your hotel bill. Checks should be made payable to "Convention Fund," and requests for reservations should be sent to Mrs. Sharon Omvig, 364 Marydell Road, Baltimore, Maryland 21229. Mrs. Omvig's telephone number is (301) 644-8151.

As we said in our earlier Convention Bulletin, an important part of our national convention is the door prizes. Chapters and affiliates should begin now to collect these. In the past we have informally put a minimum value of \$25.00 on prizes but many have been worth considerably more. If you wish to mail door prizes to Maryland before this summer, send them to Mr. Willie Thompson, President, National Federation of the Blind of Maryland, 3435 Lynn Haven Drive, Baltimore, Maryland 21207.

This summer all roads lead to Baltimore. Come where the action is and where the policy decisions concerning the future of the blind are being made. President Willie Thompson says: "We want all of you to come to Baltimore in 1981. We will do our best to make you welcome and to show you hospitality and friendship."

JOB OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE BLIND

A Step Closer to the Top of the Stairs

Job Opportunities for the Blind distributes information on blindness and blind job applicants to employers regularly. This develops specific work opportunities for blind individuals, and it helps to improve the climate in this country for the employment of blind persons. Printed below is part of the front page of the JOB Bulletin Employer's Edition for February, 1981. Al-

though not reprinted here, resumes of a lawyer, a biologist, a computer programmer, a medical transcription supervisor/trainer, and a young woman in horse husbandry were included in the Bulletin. Employers who receive materials such as this are telling us that they are learning about blindness and gaining new perspective.

As JOB begins its second year of opera-

tion, it continues to have truly gratifying success. By February 1, 1981, 75 blind persons who received assistance from JOB had found competitive employment and 853 had registered as applicants. Employer workshops and applicant seminars have been held in at least 11 states and several more are being planned. Within the limits of its resources JOB provides counseling and materials to applicants and employers as needed. Here is the front page of the Bulletin as it was mailed:

JOB BULLETIN
EMPLOYER'S EDITION
February, 1981

IF YOU WERE BLIND you could water-ski, bowl, fish, and dance.

IF YOU WERE BLIND you could cook, repair the kitchen sink, repair the children's toys, and raise a garden.

IF YOU WERE BLIND you could get a good education, be a responsible member of the community, vote, and earn a living.

IF YOU WERE BLIND you could be a secretary, a lawyer, a machinist, or a farmer.

IF YOU WERE BLIND you could be a school teacher, an administrator, a nurses aide, or a salesperson.

IF YOU WERE BLIND you could do the things that are normal, productive, and interesting. You could—that is—IF YOU COULD GET THE OPPORTUNITY. You could succeed if you could get someone to give you a chance.

The biggest problem faced by the blind in

this country today is not the lack of eyesight. It is the lack of understanding. All of us—blind and sighted alike—have been taught from early childhood that blindness is, perhaps, the worst thing that could possibly befall a person. IT NEED NOT BE SO! If it is so, it is because the blind person did not receive proper training or opportunity. The training is increasingly available. The opportunity will come with better understanding. Blindness affects only the eyes. Lack of eyesight has nothing to do with competence, intelligence, skills, aptitudes, or ability in general.

Methods used by the blind may be somewhat different—no less good—than those used by the sighted. Techniques and tools exist that are effective for blind persons.

BLIND PERSONS EXIST WHO ARE IMPORTANT TO YOU and the positions for which you are looking for well-qualified, competent applicants.

Read about Lauren Eckery. Mrs. Eckery is an attractive, intelligent, competent, young woman. The job she sought can easily be done by a blind person. There was no opportunity for Mrs. Eckery in the hospitals.

Read the sample resumes enclosed. Do you have a position for which one of these persons is qualified? What other positions do you have open? Send listings of job vacancies to Job Opportunities for the Blind.

Duane Gerstenberger, Director
Job Opportunities for the Blind
1800 Johnson Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21230

TO GET THE BALL ROLLING IN THE OTHER DIRECTION

(Note: The National Federation of the Blind of Nebraska held its annual convention at Lincoln during the weekend of December 6, 1980. Immediately preceding the convention (December 5) a JOB (Job Opportunities for the Blind) seminar occurred. As part of that seminar, the following presentation was made by Laurie Eckery.)

I'm sure you've all heard the expression "keep the ball rolling." When used, this expression usually pertains to something which is perceived as right, fair and important. For the blind, prejudice is like a gigantic crushing ball whose momentum has been steered in the wrong direction for centuries. Countless lives have been knocked off their course by this momentum. Job Opportunities for the Blind exists because too many blind people have not been treated in a way that is right or fair—and this, is important.

I am here today to relate a series of events in my life which have proved to me how strongly ingrained people's negative attitudes towards blindness are and the overwhelming power these attitudes have in what happens to an individual.

First let me tell you of employment discrimination. Three and a half years ago I decided I wanted to work outside the home. I wanted a job in a hospital that would benefit patients and would also give me something worthwhile to do. I applied at three hospitals for an entry-level position as a sterile services technician. I intended to start at the bottom and work up. I know, from experience and have witnesses who also know, that from the outset, blindness was all that was seen in me. Regardless of the qualifications I had (and there were many) these were repeatedly overlooked because the employers and personnel people I was in contact with refused to believe that I really was qualified; that I really could

perform the job; though I might have a few different ways of doing things, that my performance on the job would not necessarily be inferior to that of a sighted person. Believe me, in some cases they were even unwilling to allow me to be interviewed. I tried repeatedly for this job and when that seemed to get me nowhere, I decided to try office work though that was not exactly what I was looking for. Lo and behold, the same types of excuses came up again. It appeared that, whatever I was interested in doing, others foresaw failure—without any proof, of course. It was like being judged guilty before being proved innocent. I found that the people I was dealing with in one hospital had almost exactly the same opinions on the matter as those in another hospital. I have no proof in writing, but I know that there was communication between the hospitals. Persons in one hospital consulted with those in another and gave each other moral support in continuing to believe that a blind person could not handle the work. I needed and wanted a job and wasn't being allowed one for the wrong reasons. I didn't know what to do. One realization I had, which was something I learned by being involved in the National Federation of the Blind, was that the terrible experiences I was having were not related to me as a person. Such things and worse were happening every day to blind people all over the country—all over the world. I knew that to do nothing about this situation would be easy for me, but what about all those

other people? Could I do anything to help the employment situation for the blind in general? Sure I could.

Locally, the Nebraska Equal Opportunity Commission and nationally the Office for Civil Rights existed to help people like me. I filed a complaint against one of the hospitals, since after all, this was the way I could get a job and help other blind people besides.

It was not easy for me to file these complaints, for I had no idea what the outcomes might be. But I kept hearing all the questions—all the questions that were being directed to me but being asked about all blind people: “How would you get to work?” (How did they think I got there?) “How could you manage hallways that might be slick-hallways—some of which are short and some long? Stairways that don’t always have the same amount of steps in them? How could you know your way around a nine-story hospital? How would you know where to go?” I wonder what kind of extremely sheltered existence they must have thought I had had. My world was the same as theirs: it had the same diversity in floor textures, hall lengths, amounts of stairs, and outdoors the same kind of terrain they dealt with including barricades and construction. They asked why I couldn’t do volunteer work: “After all, don’t they have pensions for you people?” Nothing related to economic self-reliance, dignity or my right to do what anyone else would do ever occurred to them. Wasn’t I an insurance risk? Couldn’t my presence bother a patient to the point of having a heart attack? Wouldn’t it be easier for me to...one thing or another? My resounding and true answer to all of this was “No!” But I was not believed—we were not believed—and I filed the complaints.

Now let me talk to you about discrimination in handling a discrimination com-

plaint. Again, negative attitudes about blindness interfered with the work of the Equal Opportunity Commission in Nebraska and the Office of Civil Rights in HEW. And, you guessed it, I really could not get assistance from this source. In handling my case the Nebraska Equal Opportunity Commission considered their investigation of my complaint to be proper even though they consulted with the hospital but not with me; even though they issued correspondence to my counselor at the Services for the Visually Impaired and not to me; and even though they saw “Reasonable Accommodation” as the primary concern when it was not. Thus a negative determination was made by the Equal Opportunity Commission in this case. So my questions are now what good is the EOC? Do they know about right and fair treatment for the blind? Do they consider the issues which are really important in a case like mine? The blind must work until officers of the Equal Opportunity Commission are able to deal with the problems I confronted. No matter how many cases it takes, we will continue, and we will be understood. Our problems will be dealt with fairly by the Equal Opportunity Commission in Nebraska and other agencies similar to it.

This brought about an onslaught of paperwork shuffling, the passing of responsibilities to other people, all kinds of misinterpretations and misunderstandings and above all a great time lag. It was decided that we should have more evidence on our side by using the testimony of “experts” as consultants. They consulted with a blind engineer, a legal firm and a private rehabilitation counselor. The legal firm turned out to be helpful, but the others did not believe in the ability of blind persons either. As it stands now, because of a court decision related to the circuit in which my case resides, my employment discrimination case has been

put on hold. Who knows how long it will be suspended? Who knows if a decision will ever be made? And if so, who knows what the decision will be? But I know deep inside of me that I could have done those jobs if I had been given the chance, and there are other blind persons who can do those jobs if we can get them the chance. I consider myself to be lucky, because I have a husband who is employed; and because I knew the right person, I have a job as a secretary. In other words, things could have been worse for me. What about all those blind people who have no hope and few dreams? Besides, I know that the same things could happen today again and may. I have a terrible feeling about that.

The momentum of the ball continues. No one person can possibly stop that momentum. No small handful of blind people can do it either. The organized blind movement has attempted to at least slow it down. What really needs to happen is for us to get the ball rolling in the other direction; and

we must put a halt to its present course. All of us must get together and give that ball a mighty shove in the other direction. And that is what we are doing. That is why we are here today—you who are employers and we who are blind job applicants.

Employers and personnel officers who understand that they have things to learn about blindness and want to work with us are essential. You have come to meet with us today. This is a sign of good faith, and we thank you for it. I know you want to be fair and to give blind persons the opportunity to earn a living and to make a contribution in your place of business. That is what we want, too. The fact that we can have a seminar such as this one is progress—progress that can, in time, mean that there will be fewer cases such as mine, and perhaps eventually, none at all. I thank you for letting me share my experiences with you. I hope it has helped you to give fair consideration to other blind applicants whom you will interview.

THE INSURANCE BATTLE TAKES A NEW TWIST

by JAMES OMVIG

For years we of the Federation have been working to eliminate discrimination against the blind by insurance carriers in this country. In 1978 and 1979 we made tremendous progress when we were able to convince the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC) that massive unfair discrimination exists and to promulgate model regulations and laws to forbid discrimination.

We now have laws or regulations outlawing such discrimination in over thirty states, and we continue to press forward so that every state will prohibit this destructive practice.

In each insurance discrimination case we

have fought, and every hearing dealing with regulations or laws, industry officials have been asked, "What empirical data do you have to justify treating blind persons differently from sighted persons?" Always the answer was, "None!" (The Federation's position has been that, if we truly are poorer risks, we should pay accordingly, since we do not want charity.)

In the summer of 1980, Scott Lewis, our affiliate president in Washington state, applied for insurance with the Lincoln National Company. He was denied waiver of premium benefits. Scott then filed a complaint with the Washington State Insurance

Commission in order to right the wrong. However, we were surprised when Lincoln National produced a study which purportedly demonstrates that blind persons are poorer risks than sighted persons.

Based on this study, the Washington Insurance Department dismissed Scott's complaint. However, the Insurance Commissioner was willing to permit Scott and the Federation to provide information about the Lincoln study if we could produce or locate other evidence.

Following is the full text of a letter which I have written to the Washington State Insurance Department. We do not yet know what the outcome will be, but we feel confident that justice will prevail.

January 12, 1981

Re: Lincoln National Life
Insurance Company
Policy Number 64-4031940

Mr. Leonard A. Johnson
Claims Deputy/Insurance Commissioner
311 Olympic National Life Building
Seattle, Washington 98104

Dear Mr. Johnson:

First, on behalf of the National Federation of the Blind, I want to express my appreciation for being able to provide additional, and I believe compelling, reasons and facts in the above matter. Consistent with your November 12, 1980 letter to Scott Lewis, I request the file be reopened in view of the analysis contained herein and that an order be entered against Lincoln National in the above cause.

In my opinion, our analysis provides a sound and compelling foundation with which to enter a decision favorable to Lewis. As we show, clearly Lincoln National has unequivocally failed to meet its burden of proof to "substantiate...bonafide statistical differences" between blind insureds

and sighted insureds for the risk here at issue, namely disability.

Before turning to a detailed analysis of the Lincoln study, let me supply you with certain facts and make some comments.

In 1977 and 1978, when the National Federation of the Blind (NFB) was working with the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC) to develop model regulations and laws, industry representatives were continually asked, "What evidence do you have to prove that blind persons are poor risks?" Always the answer was, "None."

At a meeting in Kansas City, Missouri, one industry representative (I do not recall whether it was Lincoln National) said, "We don't have any statistics, but we'll find some. We will go through our files and find out who was blind at time of death, and we'll develop statistics."

At that point, Herb Anderson, the then Iowa Insurance Commissioner, asked, "And just how many death certificates do you think you will find which say 'cause of death, blindness'? Blind people, like sighted people, die from something."

I do not know whether Lincoln National has recently generated the subject study, or whether it existed in 1977 and 78. It does seem odd that, if reliable data existed at that time, it was not presented to justify differentials in the treatment of blind persons.

I believe the following analysis will demonstrate clearly that Lincoln National has failed to meet its burden.

We begin with the observation that the critical statutory language ("when...differences...have been substantiated") clearly places the burden of proof to "substantiate" on Lincoln National.

We also note that the risk at issue in the waiver of premium clause is *disability, not death*.

We also note and conclude unequivocally

cally, that the Lincoln National data *does not* constitute an "actuarial report" or "actuarial calculations" or "actuarial recommendations" as those terms of art are used within the actuarial profession. Indeed it is a misnomer and a misdeed for Lincoln National to use the term "actuarial" in connection with the sparse data. Though Lincoln National attempts to add credibility to its "Studies of Blind Insured Lives" by stating "our Actuarial Research Department...have undertaken studies in this area" (Page 3 Yahne memo), the data submitted is not an "actuarial report" nor an "actuarial calculation" nor an "actuarial recommendation." Indeed, the professional standards to which Lincoln National's qualified actuaries (Associates or Fellows in the Society of Actuaries) have agreed to adhere provide as follows:

Calculations and Recommendations.

(b) The Actuary will exercise his best judgment to insure that any calculations or recommendations made by him or under his direction are based on sufficient and reliable data, that any assumptions made are adequate and appropriate and that the methods employed are consistent with the sound principles established by precedents or common usage within the profession.

(Guide 4, *Guides to Professional Conduct*, 1980 *Year Book*, page 336; Guide 4 (b), *Guides to Professional Conduct*, Society of Actuaries, 1980 *Year Book*, page 41.)

Obviously, if Lincoln National elects to somehow characterize the data as an "actuarial report" etcetera, we believe it would be appropriate to have a qualified actuary so certify.

Failure on the part of Lincoln National to provide such certification results in the obvious conclusion that the data is simply some numbers attached to a lawyer's memorandum.

In addition, we request that the Washington Insurance Department utilize the services of the State Actuary in this matter. We believe he will concur with our conclusion that the data is just that, and not an "actuarial report."

The point of the preceding discussion is to emphasize that the only stature the data has, is as a collection of numbers, and as we shall show, not much else from a relevance standpoint.

Page 3 of the Yahne memo suggests the American Council of Life Insurance can confirm through an actuarial report that blind insureds experience a greater frequency of disability than sighted insureds. We do not believe such an actuarial report by the ACLI exists. Even if such report exists, we do not believe that the ACLI, through its actuarial report or other statistics, can show that "bonafide statistical differences...have been substantiated" between blind insureds and sighted insureds for the risk at issue, namely disability. If they do, we hereby request that Lincoln National arrange to provide such report to you with a copy to us and Mr. Lewis. Failure by Lincoln National to provide the report, of course, confirms our position that this statement is pure conjecture and thus supports our position that Lincoln has not met its statutory burden of proof.

At the same place in the memo, Yahne says that "these statistics have been confirmed by other carriers and independent authors." We do not believe other carriers and independent authors can provide an actuarial report or other statistics which show that "bonafide statistical differences...have been substantiated" between blind insureds and sighted insureds for the risk at issue, namely *disability*. If they do, we hereby request Lincoln National to make such reports available. Failure by Lincoln National to provide the reports, of course,

confirms our position that this statement is pure conjecture and supports our conclusion that Lincoln has not met its statutory burden of proof.

Having concluded 1) that Lincoln National has the statutorily imposed burden of proof to show that “bonafide differences... have been substantiated” as to the risk of *disability* for blind insureds when compared to sighted insureds; 2) that Lincoln National *has not* provided an actuarial report or document, but merely a “nice collection of numbers”; 3) that Lincoln National has not (and we believe cannot) provide supporting data from either the ACLI or other insurers or authors (Even if provided, the statutory criteria will continue to be the measure of the relevance of such data, namely “bonafide statistical differences... have been substantiated.”) we turn to a direct analysis of Lincoln National’s “nice collection of numbers.”

In LNL 1954–74 Mortality Study, Lincoln suggests that it used 1,854 years of exposure issued for a 20 year period ending in 1973 and traced to policy anniversary in 1974. Assuming the average insured life was covered for 15 years, we begin by noting the study uses only 120 lives. For an entity with more than \$4 billion in assets and more than \$300 million in annualized ordinary life premiums,¹ using 120 insured lives as a basis for a nationwide policy of a refusal to issue a waiver clause is, of course, ludicrous.

This deficiency surfaces throughout the study. For example, Lincoln, in its study, says “Blind insured lives rated as increased risks for the Life benefit showed a risk of death 38 percent (Lincoln National shows true creativity here. Eight deaths compared with 7.124 anticipated deaths shows a risk

of death 12 percent higher, not 38 percent higher.) higher than anticipated.”

Closer reading of this dramatic figure shows that 8 deaths occurred against an anticipated 7.124. We wonder what dramatic conclusion would be stated had only 6 deaths occurred in this category. Certainly Lincoln National would have conceded the case! (This analysis, of course, compels us to request that Lincoln National answer whether blind insureds showed a lower risk of death in categories not discussed in the study.)

In other categories, 14 actual deaths compared to 7.019 anticipated, 10 actual deaths compared to 4.578 anticipated, and 3.46 to an anticipated 3 underscores the lack of raw data and the inherent lack of reliability. Imagine a nationwide enterprise predicating policy on “compelling” data such as 3.46 lives to 3 lives anticipated or upon 8 actual lives to 7.019 anticipated! We suggest no statistician would ever certify that such meager data “substantiates... bonafide statistical differences.”

But meager and insufficient data is not the worst of it. As discussed earlier, the insurer’s risk in a waiver clause is *disability*, *not death*. All of the data provided by Lincoln relates to increased risk of *death* and has absolutely nothing to do with an increased risk of *disability* for blind insureds. Lincoln though, has no trouble hurdling this fatal gap. Without an iota of data it concludes:

Where the risk of mortality is found to be increased, . . . the risk of disability and hospitalization can reasonably be inferred to be increased also.

Based on data that we believe no statistician and certainly no professional actuary would certify as “substantiat(ing)... bonafide statistical differences” in increased risk of *death*, Lincoln National, with a

¹See *Best’s Insurance Reports – Life – Health*, 1980.

written sentence and no data, hurdles right on through to conclude it all shows an increased risk of *disability*.

You see, Lincoln National has no data on the point. That is the tragedy of this case, that is the factor that makes this file, yes even this case, an outrage. An outrage against the state of Washington, against the legislature that enacted these statutory provisions, against the blind who are—without any supporting data—the victims of speculation—speculation that does not even by the wildest of imaginations, meet this statutorily required criteria. Lincoln National has no data because it has never issued waiver of premium clauses to the blind and therefore *could not* have any data.

Lincoln National has reservations about this file because to prevail, it must argue that even though it has *no data on this issue*, that even though there exists a total absence of data, it somehow has shown by inference, (of all things) that “bonafide statistical differences... have been substantiated.”

Conclusion

Either Lincoln National is prepared to

certify and state that what they have provided “substantiates... bonafide difference” in the increased risk of *disability* or they are not. We challenge Lincoln National to so certify. In his memo, Yahne says the data “tends to show.” Under the applicable statute, “tends to show” is not good enough; “substantiates” is the key language. By its own admission, Lincoln has not met the burden. We challenge them to provide similar substantiation by ACLI, and by “other carriers and authors.” We challenge Lincoln National to answer whether its study showed categories where the blind had better than anticipated experience.

Our analysis shows unequivocally on its face, that an order in favor of Lewis and against Lincoln is compelled by the record.

Very truly yours,
James H. Omvig, Chairman
Committee on Insurance
Discrimination
National Federation of the
Blind

FORMER HEAD OF MISSISSIPPI INDUSTRIES FOR THE BLIND INDICTED AND CONVICTED

Robert Sibley, former head of Mississippi Industries for the Blind, has attended more than one NFB convention. He has made statements supporting our positions in more than one battle. Yet, when it recently developed that he had been engaging in illegal activity in connection with the workshop, we treated him as we would any other person who had behaved in that manner.

Unlike NAC (the National Accreditation Council for Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Handicapped) we truly support “standards” and the provision of “quality

services to the blind.” We hold our friends to the same code of ethics to which we hold our opponents. We have our own system of accreditation, and those who meet our standards must truly “serve” the blind—not just themselves or their own personal interests.

Furthermore, we believe we should publicize exploitation of the blind wherever we find it. There should not be partiality or favoritism in this regard. We are not NAC or the American Foundation for the Blind, and we should not behave as if we were. In

other words, we should not favor our friends and hide their misdeeds or try unjustly to blacken the names of our detractors. We should (to the best of our knowledge and ability) tell the truth about what happens in the field of work with the blind, and we should not slant that truth or try to conceal it or play favorites. Mostly (we are pleased to say) our friends usually measure up extremely well to these standards of ethical conduct and decent behavior—which is one reason why they *are* our friends. Very often our opponents do not measure up to these standards—explaining, perhaps, why they *are* our opponents and why they feel such vindictive anger toward us.

Be this as it may, we believe the blind of the nation will want to read the following article. Under date of January 28, 1981, it appeared in the *Clarion, Mississippi Ledger*. It is headlined: "Ex-MIB Execs Plead Guilty, On Probation." Here is the article in its entirety.

Two Morton men, both former executives for the Mississippi Industries for the Blind, each pleaded guilty Tuesday to charges of fraudulent interstate securities transportation.

Former MIB Director Robert Sibley and former MIB plant manager Bobby Ray Harrison were each sentenced to two concurrent sentences of three years, which was suspended

by U.S. District Judge Walter L. Nixon Jr. Instead, Harrison and Sibley will each be on probation for five years and each must pay a \$1,500 fine and pay \$8,500 in restitution to the state Department of Audit for MIB.

Harrison and Sibley both originally entered innocent pleas to the charges late last year. The charges involve the transportation of two MIB checks from Jackson to Houston, Texas.

Their indictments were the result of an FBI investigation into illegally diverted excess materials for government contracts from MIB.

Sibley, Harrison and two Texas men were indicted on two counts each of transporting two checks, which totaled \$49,000, from Jackson to Houston during 1979. The checks allegedly covered fraudulent transactions involving the channeling of surplus materials from government contracts.

The checks were for money with which MIB was to have bought materials from Houston Wipers and Supply, which deals in industrial wiping cloths and mill supplies. The materials were never delivered.

That firm was owned by Texans Jake Blend and Leon W. Brown, who were also indicted in connection with the scheme. Assistant U.S. Attorney James B. Tucker, who represented the government in the case, said Blend and Brown were supposed to be in court Tuesday but failed to appear.

WHAT DO WE GIVE—AND WHY

by RAMONA WALHOF

When my son was five years old I had occasion to say to him: "When you went to Johnny's birthday party, which did you enjoy more: watching Johnny open the present you brought him, or eating the ice cream and cake he gave you?" My son had no problem answering the question: "It was

more fun to watch him open the present I gave him," he said.

Anyone who stops to think about it knows that we all want and need to give to others, and the best part of it all is when we know that what we give is appropriate for the occasion, the cause, the person, or all three.

That is why we give of our money, our time, our imagination, and our energy to the National Federation of the Blind. We give because we want to and because we believe what we give is helping more when given to the Federation than it would if given and used elsewhere. Federationism has made us all better people. It brings out the best in all of us, whether we or our enemies know it or not.

Yet, questions are raised by local chapters and state affiliates: How can we use what we have most effectively and for the benefit of our own local members? Would it be better to assist twenty-five people to attend our state convention or to assist five people to attend the national convention? Would it be better to publish our state newsletter every month instead of quarterly or send the money to the *Braille Monitor*? Would it be better to make a donation to a local service or to the national treasury of the Federation? Should we charter a bus and make a trip, or make a contribution to the tenBroek Memorial Fund? Since many of our chapter members are not as interested in national legislation and court cases as they might be, shouldn't we take their interests into consideration when it comes to spending the money we raised by having our spaghetti dinner? How can we really justify sending someone to the March on Washington when many of our members don't know much about it or even want to know?

In a nationwide organization such as ours, these questions come up first in one city and then in another. We are learning how to be better Federationists. We are learning more about the organization and more about ourselves all the time. Sometimes we are shortsighted, and sometimes we lack experience or data. We as individuals and we as chapters and state affiliates must make decisions, not only about what

we can do, but also about what we cannot do. All of us have asked one or another of the questions above, and no doubt, we have come up with different answers. And there are other questions. If we send our money to the national treasury of the Federation, what good will it do our local blind people? When we sold tickets for the raffle, we told those who bought them that the money was to be spent for the benefit of the blind in our city. Therefore, is it dishonest if we send that money to the national treasury of the Federation?

If these questions are raised in good faith (and generally they are) then they deserve serious attention and a serious answer. One answer—and it seems to me a reasonable one—is another question.

Why did we organize as a National Federation of the Blind in the first place? Why do local organizations find it more effective to be affiliated with a state and a national organization of the blind than simply to go it alone? Not only blind persons, but scores or hundreds of other organizations have found that national organization is desirable and effective. Of course, the answer is obvious to all of us. We organized because a national organization with 500 local chapters can be well-coordinated, hard-hitting, better informed, and make use of all resources more thoroughly than 500 local chapters working separately. If one school district has a good program for the education of blind children, a national organization of blind persons makes it more likely that other school districts in other states and cities throughout the country will learn about it, learn from it, and have the opportunity to build a similar program. The same is true of rehabilitation programs, legislation affecting the blind, services for the senior blind, dealing with cases of discrimination, developing and circulating quality literature on blindness, developing

new technology and helping other people to learn about it, making use of new methods and tools that are helpful to blind persons. But this is not all; the list goes on. National coordination is essential in helping employers find new kinds of employment, building better library services for the blind, monitoring the work of federal and state agencies in work with the blind, helping blind persons find and purchase good quality aids and appliances at reasonable prices (the talking clock is only one example).

Every blind person in the country (whether or not he or she is a member-at-large or a member of a local chapter—or, for that matter, not a member at all) benefits from all of these activities. Life for every blind person in this country is better than it was 100 years ago, 50 years ago, 25 years ago, or 10 years ago—a great deal better; and it is primarily because of the work of the National Federation of the Blind. It increases respect for all blind persons a little when a speech by Dr. Jernigan is included in the Congressional Record. Respect for all blind persons is increased a little when Mary Main appears on television. Well-reasoned and hard-hitting testimony before a congressional committee helps every blind person in this country, even if the legislation desired is not passed by Congress. The reason the National Federation of the Blind has this effectiveness and respect is because we are truly a national movement. Five hundred or more strong and active local chapters and 51 strong and active state affiliates stand behind Federation spokesmen, and more and more public officials and agencies serving the blind know it. When these people get acquainted with any of us and hear what we have to say to them, they become aware that we are speaking for the blind of the nation. Local and state agencies serving the blind identify our local representatives

who communicate with them with the entire body of the National Federation of the Blind. New members of the organization first get to know a local chapter and state affiliate, but they become a part of a strong national movement. Local and state newsletters, Christmas parties, candy sales, or walk-a-thons help make the Federation what it is throughout the country. We could not be what we are without them.

Dr. Jernigan has said that \$1.00 spent by the national treasury of the Federation can buy as much as \$25.00 spent by a state affiliate or \$100.00 spent by a local chapter. Of course, this is because anything that is accomplished on the national level affects all of us directly, whereas the same things accomplished at the local level affect many times fewer people in the same way. The *Braille Monitor* is perhaps the best example. Any article printed in the *Braille Monitor* will be read by scores of thousands of people. The same article published in a state newsletter, would be read by hundreds of people, or perhaps as many as 2,000. In a local chapter's newsletter, that article may be read by 100 or perhaps as many as 500 people. Furthermore, whether we like it or not, the same person reading the same article will pay more attention to it if it appears in the *Braille Monitor* than if it is printed in a state or local newsletter.

What is true of the *Braille Monitor* is also true of other material developed by the National Federation of the Blind. Whatever is distributed from our National headquarters is available to each and every member of state affiliates and local chapters for sale or distribution, but it does not work the other way around. An aid or appliance cannot be distributed to the whole nation by one state affiliate. If that were done, it would become a national project.

If six individuals learn six different facts about a situation, and each tells a friend—

then twelve people know one fact about that situation. If six people learn six different facts about a situation (let's say the Minneapolis Society for the Blind) and each tells the National President of the Federation—he has all the information. He and the whole national body are then in a position to make informed decisions about the matter and put the resources of the entire movement into an effort to carry out those decisions and spread the word about them throughout the nation.

Minimum wages for the blind in sheltered workshops is an important and timely goal of the Federation. Many of our members are employed in sheltered workshops in all parts of the country. Cincinnati and Houston are important arenas for action by the Federation. Every workshop employee and every blind person everywhere will benefit by these cases. Where to make this stand had to be determined on the basis of where the time and situation were right and where we had the best chance for success. These cases will cost money, and there will be some local factors to take into consideration. What happens in these two cities affects all blind persons and many who are not blind in this country. Blind persons who know nothing of the Federation and nothing of Cincinnati or Houston—some who have worked to damage our movement—will benefit from these cases. Our own members who are new or unschooled in some of the activities of the Federation will be helped personally by these cases. The same is true of Social Security legislation, cases in the courts, problems with agencies in work with the blind. The Job Opportunities for the Blind program is building a better employment climate for blind persons today and all who will be looking for work in the years to come. People who never heard of JOB are getting fair consideration in the employment market

and will continue to do so because of the Federation. President Jernigan has said that we have worked to make our National headquarters impressive to both our friends and our opponents. How could it be otherwise? The space at our National headquarters is a source of pride and strength to our members and friends. It must be a source of concern to those who (for whatever reason) are bitter or hostile toward us. Although they are not likely to believe it, even blind persons who work to destroy the Federation are helped by our strength. Their status in their communities rises with the strength and the success of the entire Federation. Very few people really want to stand face to face with Dr. Jernigan and debate with him. His logic and eloquence are so well-known and impressive that few people would care to challenge him. The office space of our National headquarters, the caliber of our leaders and literature generally, the commitment of our members throughout the country are forces unmatched in work with the blind in this country. They are respected and feared by NAC and the American Foundation for the Blind and by others. Our strength is what has caused them to become more and more bitter in recent years and finally what has caused the Foundation to reassess its position toward us.

But, of course, the number of agencies and individuals who are bitter toward the Federation is diminishing gradually year by year. There are agencies that are putting Federation philosophy into practice—agencies that are encouraging blind people to reach for real equality. And each year there are more such agencies, and more individuals in work with the blind who stand with us, just as there are more blind people who understand Federationism and make it part of their daily lives. As our movement gains momentum, nothing can stop us. More and

more people know who we are and know we can never go back.

All of this must be coordinated nationally, and a big job it is for our leaders—but not *just* our leaders. It is a job for all of us, the tens of thousands of blind persons who are the Federation throughout the country. That is why we are what we are. None of us can give too much of our time, our talent, our money. It is a joy to give it, and from a practical point of view, it is the best investment any of us can possibly make for ourselves personally, for our friends who are blind, or for the next generation of the blind.

Now let me add a postscript: If there are those who have understood me to say that the local chapter should not be financed or supported or strengthened, they have

totally failed to comprehend what I have said. Our movement can only be as strong at the state and the national levels as it is in the local chapters. If there are those who have understood me to say that we do not need to cherish and build and finance and strengthen our state affiliates, I say again that they have failed to comprehend. What I have been discussing is not the support of one level of our movement to the neglect or exclusion of another. Rather, I have been talking about perspective and priorities—about commitment and love and understanding; for in the final analysis the Federation (at all of its levels and in whatever aspect) will be as weak or as strong as the commitment and belief in the hearts of each of its individual members.

PAC UPDATE

Now that our computer is beginning to be fully operational, it is becoming increasingly possible to get a handle on the various facets of our day to day operations. For one thing, we can now keep up to date on the figures concerning PAC (the Pre-Authorized Check plan) more easily and quickly than ever before. We must constantly remind ourselves that our individual contributions to the Federation translate into better lives for blind people. It is that simple and that compelling.

PAC is now one of the most important sources of our fiscal stability. We are doing well in our PAC giving, but we must still do better—and more of us must participate. The following facts and figures will give you the profile of PAC as of February 6, 1981:

828 Federationists are contributing to PAC. The total monthly PAC contribution

is \$16,141.16. Projected for a year, this would mean an annual contribution of \$193,693.92. In other words, the average PAC contributor is giving just over \$19.49 per month—or \$234.00 per year. What other organization in this country has almost a thousand members each of whom is willing to give an average of over \$200.00 per year to support its goals and purposes! That is real belief, real commitment—and it is why we are the unbeatable, unstoppable force that we are. Our movement means something to us. It is important in our lives, and we prove that fact by putting our money where our mouths are.

The figure of \$19.49 per month is, of course, only an average. The amount of the monthly contribution given by different individuals varies greatly. Nobody else in the whole world can (or should) tell any of us precisely how much we should contri-

bute to PAC each month. It is a matter for each of us to decide in consultation with ourselves. It depends upon the number of other commitments the individual has, the economic circumstances, the priorities, and how important each of us really thinks the Federation is. As of February 6, 1981, the highest PAC pledge in the country is \$177.50 per month. Five people give \$150.00 a month or more. On the other hand, some contributions are as low as \$2.00 or \$2.50 per month. These lower contributions should be just as valued and appreciated as the higher ones if they truly represent a sacrifice and are all that the individual can afford. Each of us should examine our conscience and our commitment. We should determine how much this movement really means to us, and then we should set our priorities and give accordingly.

In the following rankings you will ob-

serve that every state is represented on the PAC plan. You will also notice that there have been some interesting changes since the last report and that a few of the states are making substantially higher contributions than the others. PAC pledges do not come from the activities of professional fundraisers or from outside sources. They come from us, as a measure of our own personal belief and commitment. The reason that PAC is higher in one state and lower in another is not a matter of how rich the state is or whether it is rural or has a good rehabilitation program or is conservative or liberal or has this or that population mix. It is entirely a matter of organizational strength and acceptance by individual members of personal responsibility for getting the job done. We have reason to feel both pride and satisfaction in the following statistics:

PRE-AUTHORIZED CHECK RANKINGS

FEBRUARY 6, 1981

RANK—STATE	MEMBERS	AMOUNT
1 Maryland	56	\$ 2,180.50
2 Missouri	36	1,843.00
3 Iowa	48	1,197.00
4 Colorado	41	986.00
5 California	48	864.50
6 Minnesota	29	781.00
7 Michigan	22	647.50
8 Massachusetts	41	546.50
9 Illinois	20	521.00
10 New York	20	476.50
11 Nebraska	30	468.00
12 Kansas	20	463.50
13 Ohio	34	426.00
14 South Carolina	51	332.00
15 District of Columbia	10	312.00
16 Virginia	16	286.00
17 Kentucky	17	285.00

18	Idaho	30	284.00
19	Louisiana	19	280.66
20	Texas	20	249.50
21	North Carolina	21	247.00
22	Alaska	13	218.00
23	Indiana	13	203.00
24	Mississippi	14	196.00
25	Florida	11	190.00
26	Arkansas	17	178.00
27	Washington	4	165.00
28	Connecticut	10	121.00
29	West Virginia	9	106.00
30	Pennsylvania	11	101.50
31	Wisconsin	5	100.00
32	Alabama	11	96.50
33	New Hampshire	10	86.00
34	Utah	7	81.00
35	Tennessee	6	80.00
36	New Jersey	6	80.00
37	Oregon	9	75.00
38	New Mexico	9	70.00
39	Georgia	4	60.00
40	South Dakota	8	54.00
41	Montana	4	45.00
42	Hawaii	2	40.00
43	Oklahoma	4	33.00
44	Arizona	3	30.00
45	Rhode Island	2	15.00
46	Nevada	1	10.00
47	North Dakota	1	10.00
48	Delaware	2	10.00
49	Wyoming	1	5.00
50	Maine	1	3.00
51	Vermont	1	2.00
TOTAL		828	\$16,141.16

UPDATE ON ASSOCIATES

In the previous article we discussed the Pre-Authorized Check plan (PAC). We now turn to another important aspect of the financing of our organization, the recruiting of "Associates." This is the third year in which we have conducted an "Associates" contest. The current contest runs from June 1, 1980, through May 31, 1981. Associate forms received in the office of the Treasurer or in the National Office after May 31, 1981, will count in next year's contest.

A full explanation of the Associates program, as well as rules for the contest, appeared in the October–November, 1979, *Monitor*. We explained that:

In 1978 the NFB Constitution was amended to provide for "members-at-large" at the national level. These members-at-large were given the same rights, privileges, and responsibilities as any other member of the Federation at the national level—that is, they may attend the National Convention, speak on the floor, make motions, make nominations, participate in discussions carried on by the delegation from their state, and serve on committees. As is the case with any other member, they do not have an individual vote at the National Convention since votes are cast by elected delegates from the state affiliates. In other words, they have a real and meaningful membership. Unless they specifically join a state or local affiliate, they are not members of the affiliate and have no more rights in the affiliate than any other nonmember of the affiliate. They are national members-at-large.

National "members-at-large" must fill out a membership application form and pay an assessment of \$1.00 per year to the National treasury to keep their membership in force. Each year a new application form must accompany the \$1.00 assessment. Any

application form dated, received, and accepted either at the Treasurer's office or at the National Office in Baltimore before October 1 will entitle the applicant to membership for the remainder of that calendar year. Any application form dated, received, and accepted at the Treasurer's office or the National Office after October 1 entitles the person to membership for the remainder of that calendar year and all of the following calendar year. Members of the Federation who recruit national "members-at-large" should make certain that the name and full address of the member-at-large are legibly printed or typed in the appropriate place on the application form. In addition, the name and the state of the person doing the recruiting should be clearly printed or typed in the place on the form which says "local representative of the National Federation of the Blind." This is absolutely necessary if the recruiter is to receive credit for enrolling the member-at-large.

The Associates program was established to permit national members-at-large to make meaningful contributions to the movement. Any person filling out one of our national membership forms and making a contribution of \$10.00 or more becomes an Associate. From time to time information mailings are made from the National Office to Associates, and all contributions from Associates are acknowledged.

Some of our members say that their means are so limited that they have difficulty joining the PAC plan. However, the recruiting of Associates does not depend on how much money you have. It depends upon how hard you are willing to work and how much the movement means to you.

This year in Baltimore at the National Convention the person who has recruited

the most Associates from June 1, 1980, through May 31, 1981, will be declared the winner of the contest and given a prize of \$1,000.00 in cash. Second prize will be \$500.00; third prize will be \$200.00; and fourth prize will be \$100.00. As Federationists will remember, Sandy Sanderson of Alaska won last year's contest, plus the fact that Alaska took the other top two prizes. It will also be remembered that Sandy said that he and Alaska intended to win this year's contest. As he put it, "The bear has spoken."

In this article we are printing the rankings in the contest as of February 10, 1981. To give some comparison, we cite figures from this time last year. From June 1, 1979, through January 27, 1980, 46 states (in-

cluding the District of Columbia) had recruited Associates. Five had not. As of February 10 this year, 47 states (including the District of Columbia) have recruited Associates. As of January 28 last year, 238 known recruiters had sold 1,318 Associates for a total of \$24,539.00. As of February 10 this year, we have done slightly better, but we must pour on the steam during the next few weeks. You will note in the following tables that there are substantial changes in the rankings this year. Although the bear from Alaska is number one, the number two recruiter is from California, and the number three recruiter is from Iowa. Karen Mayry of South Dakota is number four. As we come down to the wire, Alaska will need to look to its laurels. Here are the rankings:

STATE RANKINGS

February 10, 1981

RANK — STATE	NUMBER OF RECRUITERS	NUMBER OF ASSOCIATES	AMOUNT
1 Alaska	7	224	\$ 4,193.00
2 Maryland	36	170	4,481.00
3 California	12	143	2,490.00
4 Massachusetts	14	114	1,702.00
5 Illinois	17	80	1,443.00
6 Iowa	14	69	958.00
7 New York	11	50	694.00
8 South Dakota	3	48	666.00
9 Ohio	12	47	1,291.00
10 Missouri	8	43	464.00
11 Connecticut	7	38	644.00
12 Arkansas	3	35	428.00
13 New Mexico	8	33	656.00
14 Michigan	9	26	477.00
15 Indiana	10	23	330.00
16 Minnesota	9	23	323.00
17 Pennsylvania	6	22	470.00
18 Texas	13	20	340.00
19 Idaho	5	18	349.00
20 Mississippi	4	17	311.00

21	Colorado	10	16	250.00
22	Kansas	6	14	600.00
23	Georgia	2	13	145.00
24	South Carolina	7	11	156.00
25	Montana	2	10	161.00
26	West Virginia	4	8	691.00
27	Nebraska	5	8	136.00
28	Oregon	3	7	86.00
29	Louisiana	4	6	165.00
30	Wisconsin	3	6	131.00
31	New Hampshire	2	6	60.00
32	Florida	3	5	80.00
33	New Jersey	5	5	51.00
34	Utah	3	4	126.00
35	Alabama	4	4	40.00
36	Washington	2	2	60.00
37	Virginia	2	2	21.00
38	North Dakota	1	2	21.00
39	Wyoming	1	2	20.00
40	North Carolina	2	2	20.00
41	Kentucky	2	2	20.00
42	District of Columbia	2	2	20.00
43	Arizona	1	1	25.00
44	Tennessee	1	1	15.00
45	Rhode Island	1	1	10.00
46	Oklahoma	1	1	10.00
47	Nevada	1	1	10.00
48	Delaware	0	0	.00
49	Hawaii	0	0	.00
50	Maine	0	0	.00
51	Vermont	0	0	.00
***TOTAL		288	1,390	\$25,840.00

INDIVIDUAL RECRUITERS BY NATIONAL RANK

FEBRUARY 10, 1981

RANK — NAME	STATE	COUNT	AMOUNT
1 Allen Sanderson	Alaska	168	\$ 3,109.00
2 Sharon Gold	California	58	1,241.00
3 Verla Kirsch	Iowa	50	611.00
4 Karen Mayry	South Dakota	46	645.00
5 Al Evans	Massachusetts	35	381.00

6	Lucy Carpenter	New York	31	346 00
7	Tom Stevens	Missouri	29	323 00
8	Carl Conner	Arkansas	28	340.00
9	Joe Fletcher	California	27	301 00
10	Junerose Killian	Connecticut	26	308.00
11	Darrel Nather	Alaska	25	485 00
12	Dora Dobbins	California	25	250 00
13	Al Maneki	Maryland	23	495.00
14	Alan Glickman	Illinois	21	210 00
15	Fred Schroeder	New Mexico	20	331.00
16	Lee Hagmeier	Alaska	19	449 00
17	Robert Eschbach	Ohio	16	793.00
18	Kenneth Jernigan	Maryland	14	855.00
19	David Ticchi	Massachusetts	14	335.00
20	Michael Hingson	Massachusetts	14	330.00
21	Al Sten	Massachusetts	14	201 00
22	Anna Katherine Jernigan	Maryland	13	321 00
23	Mary Irons	Pennsylvania	13	146 00
24	Frances Bell	California	12	135 00
25	Isaac Heyward	Georgia	11	125 00
26	Lawrence Marcelino	California	10	286 00
27	Allen Schaefer	Illinois	10	130 00
28	Paul Burkhardt	Massachusetts	10	115 00
29	Trish Miller	Maryland	9	271.00
30	Marc Maurer	Maryland	9	156 00
31	John Ford	Montana	9	146 00
32	Helen Johnson	Ohio	9	99 00
33	Sheila Samson	Ohio	9	91 00
34	Jim Omvig	Maryland	8	212.00
35	Ruth Anne Schaefer	Illinois	8	200 00
36	E. U. Parker	Mississippi	8	190 00
37	Allen Harris	Michigan	8	140 00
38	Margaret C. Cavanaugh	Alaska	8	110.00
39	Lonnie Harmon	Idaho	8	81 00
40	Mary Ellen Anderson	Maryland	7	310 00
41	Steve Machalow	Maryland	7	221 00
42	Mary Ellen Reihing	Illinois	7	182 00
43	Unknown	New York	7	175 00
44	Claire Oliver	Massachusetts	7	85 00
45	Judy Sanders	Maryland	/	70 00
46	Richard Edlund	Kansas	6	380.00
47	Unknown	Maryland	6	290.00
48	Ralph Sanders	Maryland	6	105 00
49	Searcy Ewell	Arkansas	6	78.00
50	James C. Moore	Mississippi	6	75 00
51	Beatrice Freeman	Indiana	6	60 00
52	James J. Fox	Maryland	6	60 00
53	Gail Thompson	Michigan	5	120 00
54	Sharon Omvig	Maryland	5	120 00

55	Brenda Williams	Maryland	5	81.00
56	Stephen Benson	Illinois	5	65.00
57	Joyce Scanlan	Minnesota	5	60.00
58	Pauline Murphy	Missouri	5	50.00
59	Pat Maurer	Maryland	5	50.00
60	Sharlene Czaja	Illinois	4	146.00
61	Tom Scanlan	Minnesota	4	95.00
62	Mary Main	Connecticut	4	85.00
63	Sr. Sue Micich	Wisconsin	4	71.00
64	Dinah Smith	California	4	70.00
65	George Russell, Jr.	Texas	4	70.00
66	Don Morris	Maryland	4	70.00
67	Ronald E. Metenyi	Maryland	4	70.00
68	Steve Handschu	Michigan	4	70.00
69	Ruth Bivens	Illinois	4	70.00
70	Curtis Chong	Minnesota	4	56.00
71	Unknown	Illinois	4	55.00
72	Cecelia Ross	Illinois	4	55.00
73	Dianne Huckaby	Oregon	4	55.00
74	Clarita Golender	Maryland	4	55.00
75	Ron Burt	Indiana	4	55.00
76	John Beaulieu	Massachusetts	4	55.00
77	Susan Benbow	New Mexico	4	44.00
78	Earl Jackson	Pennsylvania	4	42.00
79	Olivina Whitaker	Massachusetts	4	40.00
80	Rhoda Dower	Missouri	4	40.00
81	Peggy Chong	Minnesota	4	40.00
82	Jacquilyn Bille	Connecticut	4	40.00
83	Lucy Dattoli	West Virginia	3	521.00
84	Dick Porter	West Virginia	3	150.00
85	Mary Ellen Halverson	Idaho	3	136.00
86	Norman Gardner	Idaho	3	90.00
87	Unknown	Iowa	3	72.00
88	Barbara Pierce	Ohio	3	72.00
89	Ron Lundquist	Maryland	3	72.00
90	Donald Capps	South Carolina	3	61.00
91	Carmen Trujillo	New Mexico	3	60.00
92	M. James Glaza	Iowa	3	60.00
93	Arthur Tackman, III	New York	3	52.00
94	Esther Swygert	Maryland	3	48.00
95	Unknown	California	3	46.00
96	Unknown	Florida	3	45.00
97	Larry Streeter	Texas	3	45.00
98	John Salvatore	Illinois	3	45.00
99	Joe Lamers	Colorado	3	45.00
100	Bill Isaacs	Illinois	3	45.00
101	Ruth M. Goodwin	Massachusetts	3	45.00
102	Unknown	Massachusetts	3	40.00
103	Terry Harris	Idaho	3	31.00

104	Unknown	Michigan	3	30.00
105	Ed Meskys	New Hampshire	3	30.00
106	Donna Maglin	New Hampshire	3	30.00
107	Jeanette Harrison	California	3	30.00
108	Carol Ebner	Colorado	3	30.00
109	Margo Downey	Louisiana	3	30.00
110	Shelia P. Byrd	South Carolina	3	30.00
111	Wilma Brodley	Indiana	3	30.00
112	Arthur Segal	Pennsylvania	2	210.00
113	Ramona Walhof	Maryland	2	111.00
114	Lee Jones	New Mexico	2	111.00
115	Duane Gerstenberger	Maryland	2	110.00
116	Unknown	Kansas	2	75.00
117	Susan Stanzel	Kansas	2	75.00
118	Patricia Munson	California	2	75.00
119	Tom Bozikis	Indiana	2	60.00
120	Unknown	Colorado	2	50.00
121	Milton Taylor	Utah	2	50.00
122	Peggy Pinder	Iowa	2	50.00
123	Melba Barlow	Mississippi	2	36.00
124	James Walker	Nebraska	2	35.00
125	Unknown	Ohio	2	35.00
126	Carol Thompson	Texas	2	35.00
127	William Munck	Maryland	2	35.00
128	John Mullin	Michigan	2	35.00
129	Herbert Magin	Maryland	2	35.00
130	Paul Lorensen	Colorado	2	35.00
131	Joann Giudicessi	Massachusetts	2	35.00
132	Alan Alcorn	Kansas	2	35.00
133	Tom Winholtz	Minnesota	2	21.00
134	Donna Sorenson	North Dakota	2	21.00
135	Kathleen McGrew	Oregon	2	21.00
136	Andrew Hoffman	Ohio	2	21.00
137	John Cheadle	Nebraska	2	21.00
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139	Raymond Thorpe	Indiana	2	20.00
140	Mary Jo Seiler	Illinois	2	20.00
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142	Craig Olsen	Nebraska	2	20.00
143	Philip Oliver	Massachusetts	2	20.00
144	Marla Miller	Maryland	2	20.00
145	Tommie Johnson	Georgia	2	20.00
146	Gwen Janssen	Alaska	2	20.00
147	Mary Gerstenberger	Maryland	2	20.00
148	Charles Erickson	Iowa	2	20.00
149	Reed Devlin	New York	2	20.00
150	Tommy Craig	Texas	2	20.00
151	Max Aguilar	Wyoming	2	20.00
152	Howard May	Connecticut	1	151.00

153	Mark Plantz	Maryland	1	101.00
154	Unknown	Louisiana	1	100.00
155	Brother Soehnel	Ohio	1	100.00
156	Evelyn G. Scanavino	Illinois	1	100.00
157	Francis Frustaci	Pennsylvania	1	52.00
158	Evelyn Weckerly	Michigan	1	51.00
159	Karl Smith	Utah	1	51.00
160	Unknown	Wisconsin	1	50.00
161	Leroy Thomas	Texas	1	50.00
162	Cathlene Nusser	Nebraska	1	50.00
163	Denise Mackenstadt	Washington	1	50.00
164	Pauline Gomez	New Mexico	1	50.00
165	Pamela Gillmore	Illinois	1	50.00
166	Charlene Elder	Illinois	1	50.00
167	Glenn Crosby	Texas	1	50.00
168	Diane Corson	Iowa	1	50.00
169	Orville Williams	Colorado	1	25.00
170	Harold Wenning	New York	1	25.00
171	Unknown	Arizona	1	25.00
172	Unknown	New Mexico	1	25.00
173	Unknown	Utah	1	25.00
174	David Stayer	New York	1	25.00
175	Roberta Sorenson	Indiana	1	25.00
176	Victor Scheer	Ohio	1	25.00
177	William Roberts	Indiana	1	25.00
178	Althea Pittman	Maryland	1	25.00
179	Linda O'Neal	California	1	25.00
180	NFB of Colorado	Colorado	1	25.00
181	Joe Money	Indiana	1	25.00
182	Glenn Cordes McCoy	South Carolina	1	25.00
183	Shirley Ann Lee	Connecticut	1	25.00
184	Hank LaBonne	Louisiana	1	25.00
185	Charles Kuhnwald	Ohio	1	25.00
186	Raymond Graber	Kansas	1	25.00
187	Joe Gonzales	New Mexico	1	25.00
188	Richard P. Crawford	Iowa	1	25.00
189	Dorothy Campbell	Florida	1	25.00
190	Benjamin Alk	Connecticut	1	25.00
191	Myrthen Gauerke	Minnesota	1	21.00
192	Colleen Hurley	Maryland	1	20.00
193	Unknown	Tennessee	1	15.00
194	Linda Z. Hurlock	Montana	1	15.00
195	Blanche Ward	Missouri	1	11.00
196	Unknown	Virginia	1	11.00
197	Unknown	Idaho	1	11.00
198	Unknown	New Jersey	1	11.00
199	Willnetta Sutton	Maryland	1	11.00
200	Joy Smith	California	1	11.00
201	Johnny Ott	Michigan	1	11.00

202	Pat Gormley	Maryland	1	11.00
203	Ari Gamliel	New York	1	11.00
204	Gailand Fischer	South Dakota	1	11.00
205	Carl Wyatt	Missouri	1	10.00
206	Gary Wunder	Missouri	1	10.00
207	Curt Willoughby	Iowa	1	10.00
208	Doris Willoughby	Iowa	1	10.00
209	Lena Williams	Texas	1	10.00
210	Margaret White	Ohio	1	10.00
211	Unknown Wardell	New York	1	10.00
212	David Walker	Michigan	1	10.00
213	Unknown	Minnesota	1	10.00
214	Unknown	Kentucky	1	10.00
215	Unknown	Alabama	1	10.00
216	Unknown	Mississippi	1	10.00
217	Lois Tucker	South Carolina	1	10.00
218	Marshall Tucker	South Carolina	1	10.00
219	Eileen Truschke	Illinois	1	10.00
220	Gladys Taylor	Texas	1	10.00
221	Ethel Susong	Oklahoma	1	10.00
222	H.E. Stutters	Iowa	1	10.00
223	Loraine Stayer	New York	1	10.00
224	Hazel Staley	North Carolina	1	10.00
225	Jimmy Sparks	Arkansas	1	10.00
226	Allen Smith	Virginia	1	10.00
227	Moe Smeester	Colorado	1	10.00
228	Charlotte Seltser	Maryland	1	10.00
229	Mary Ann Saunders	West Virginia	1	10.00
230	Willis Saunders	West Virginia	1	10.00
231	David Samson	Ohio	1	10.00
232	Les Rush	Maryland	1	10.00
233	Melba Robin	Louisiana	1	10.00
234	Bob Raisbeck	Wisconsin	1	10.00
235	Rami Rabby	New York	1	10.00
236	Joseph Phillips	Pennsylvania	1	10.00
237	Keith Perrin	Connecticut	1	10.00
238	Jeff Percy	Texas	1	10.00
239	Cecile Paice	Massachusetts	1	10.00
240	James O'Connell	Texas	1	10.00
241	Barbara Nabutovsky	Florida	1	10.00
242	James Moynihan	Missouri	1	10.00
243	Jeanne Marie Moore	Minnesota	1	10.00
244	Blanche Moore	Pennsylvania	1	10.00
245	Linda Miller	New Mexico	1	10.00
246	Diane McGeorge	Colorado	1	10.00
247	Sylvia M. Matthews	Maryland	1	10.00
248	Sharon Luka	Kansas	1	10.00
249	Patricia Logan	New York	1	10.00
250	Scott Lewis	Washington	1	10.00

251	Sandy Kelly	Colorado	1	10.00
252	Sharon Kelly	New Jersey	1	10.00
253	Vera Jones	Alabama	1	10.00
254	Berneice Johnson	Iowa	1	10.00
255	Brian Johnson	Illinois	1	10.00
256	Reni Jackson	Kentucky	1	10.00
257	Lettie Jackson	Texas	1	10.00
258	David Hyde	Oregon	1	10.00
259	Thurmond Hill	Texas	1	10.00
260	Sally Ann Harper	South Dakota	1	10.00
261	Dale Hamm	Alabama	1	10.00
262	Mark K. Hamm	Alabama	1	10.00
263	Peg Halverson	District of Columbia	1	10.00
264	Jim Gashel	Maryland	1	10.00
265	Ted Garcia	Colorado	1	10.00
266	Stephen Garabedian	Rhode Island	1	10.00
267	William Fuller	Iowa	1	10.00
268	Edwina Franchild	Minnesota	1	10.00
269	Milford Force	New Jersey	1	10.00
270	Azilee Floyd	Texas	1	10.00
271	Jennie G. Fletcher	District of Columbia	1	10.00
272	Gary Doty	Nebraska	1	10.00
273	Tami Dodd	Iowa	1	10.00
274	Albert Dimarzio	Ohio	1	10.00
275	Richard Culley	Indiana	1	10.00
276	Ella Council	Nevada	1	10.00
277	Peter Cote	Massachusetts	1	10.00
278	Frank Coppel	South Carolina	1	10.00
279	Janis Clausing	Michigan	1	10.00
280	Kathleen Chapman	Maryland	1	10.00
281	Joe Carlson	Alaska	1	10.00
282	Mrs. Donald Capps	South Carolina	1	10.00
283	Doug C. Boone	Iowa	1	10.00
284	Tom Blume	New Jersey	1	10.00
285	Constance Blackmon	North Carolina	1	10.00
286	Wesley Blackman	Missouri	1	10.00
287	Albert Alexy	New Jersey	1	10.00
288	Omega Abraham	Alaska	1	10.00

TOTALS

1390

\$25,840.00

MARCH ON WASHINGTON: OUR BIGGEST AND BEST YET AS WE CONFRONT THE CHALLENGES AHEAD

The March on Washington has become an annual event of special significance to the blind. This year we assembled in the early days of February, just in time to get acquainted with the new Administration and many new members of Congress as they were settling in to make a renewed effort to cure the country's economic ills.

After several weeks of planning, which began at the Federation's Board of Directors' meeting, held in Baltimore over the Thanksgiving weekend, the March was actually underway, as Federationists from throughout the country arrived in Washington on Sunday, February 1. With almost 200 of us present, it is not too much to say that the gathering of our forces seemed to have many of the characteristics of a national convention, with old friends meeting to talk about developments in their respective states, and delegations caucusing to plan their strategies for the days ahead. There was even a bit of hospitality, but it was abundantly clear that everyone had come to work. And, indeed, there was plenty of work to be done, since there are many new faces in Congress—freshmen members in the House of Representatives, and new Senators. Each was given special attention because for many it was the first opportunity to learn of the problems facing blind people and of how they might be solved through Federal legislation. Of course, there were also old friends on Capitol Hill to be contacted as well; it all made for a jam-packed three days.

The Bellevue Hotel, located north of the Capitol, near the Amtrak station and the National Visitors Center, was headquarters for the March this year. The site was excellent, since those who wanted to could easily walk to the Senate office buildings, and the

heartier among our troops could also proceed across Capitol Hill to the three House office buildings which line Independence Avenue, immediately to the south of the Capitol building itself.

This March set several milestones, including the distinction of largest and most representative yet. We also overflowed the space provided in the headquarters hotel, giving Ralph Sanders, who coordinated all housing arrangements, a few anxious moments until ample accommodations were found in a brand new Holiday Inn, located a few blocks south of Capitol Hill. Even in these times of inflation, the room rates, the same for both hotels, were among the best we have ever had.

The first briefing session, designed to prepare everyone for the work ahead, began at 6:00 PM Sunday evening, right on time, as is our custom in Federation events. We might also note that the talking clocks were clearly in evidence, although, after an initial opportunity to have them speak in unison (6:04 PM) most clock owners were able to restrain themselves from checking the time until after the meeting had ended, nearly four hours later.

President Jernigan gaveled the briefing session to order and gave opening remarks which brought us all up to date on latest developments in the movement. There was much to feel good about, not the least of which was the report that the mortgage on our National Center in Baltimore is now paid off, and the property is free and clear. Dr. Jernigan also informed us that an investigation which had been conducted by the U. S. Attorney in Des Moines to look into the charges of the *Des Moines Register*, was now closed with the finding, in writing, that "no action by the government was

warranted"—in other words, we have been completely vindicated and the innuendoes and much-talked-about charges of our opponents totally discredited. This so-called "investigation" (which never had any substance to it in the first place, and which has been dragged out since 1978) has now finally come to an end and has turned up exactly what we always said it would turn up—nothing. It will be interesting to see whether our AFB-NAC-ACB-Des Moines Register friends are as anxious to spread this word as they have been to spread the innuendoes and the lies.

The report from Des Moines, the news about the National Center, the information that the JOB contract has been increased and renewed for another year, and a variety of similar encouraging and positive reports gave all of us ample reason for good spirit and high enthusiasm as we set forth with pride the next day to do our work in Washington.

The issues which we talked to our Senators and Representatives about this year are not unfamiliar to Federationists. Each of the issues will be discussed in some detail later in this article, and a "Legislative Memorandum," presenting an overview of social and economic conditions prevalent among the blind is included. These materials have been developed with an eye toward those elements of need which relate to the economic situation of most blind people, since the top priority for this Congress is to attack conditions of stress and instability in our national economy. As will be observed, the point to be made in general is that in solving the major economic problems now plaguing our country, the blind should not be pushed aside and ignored. Lawmakers too often fail to understand (unless we call the matter to their attention) that we, too, (those of us who are blind) have many economic problems which are often imposed

upon us by provisions of Federal law. Our job, as the organized voice of the nation's blind, is to let these policy-makers know where the changes in the laws need to be made.

It must be clear to everyone that the Election Day mandate of November 4, 1980, has signalled the beginning of a new era in national politics, and with it, a new set of priorities is now being established. Representative Barry Goldwater, Jr. (Republican of California) put it best when he addressed a large delegation of our marchers assembled on Tuesday morning, February 3, in the Rayburn House Office Building. Mr. Goldwater said that for the last ten or fifteen years Congress has enjoyed the unchecked luxury of spending the people's money as if there were no tomorrow, but finally, he said, tomorrow has arrived, and it is time to face reality by realizing that the unrestrained practices of the past cannot continue any longer.

The program which we presented to Congress this year takes this into account by focusing on those features of current law which stand as road blocks to economic progress, independence, and security for the blind. This package of legislative proposals does not call for initiating big, new, and expensive programs; it asks only to have established laws modified so as to free blind people from the restrictions which are now being imposed upon them by public policy and social attitudes.

We did not attempt to address all of the issues which currently cry out for legislative solutions, since given the times, this approach would have been counterproductive. The time will come when each matter can be taken up in its turn. As a whole, our theme was simple: The blind, more than most, suffer the pain of the hard economic times. Yet, we are often prevented from doing anything about this condition. We

are sidetracked from the main channels of productive life.

We delivered this message forcefully as we fanned out to every Congressional office. Reports received by workers in our fourth floor command post at the Bellevue indicated that our message was greeted with generally positive response, and we found many friends who are ready and willing to join in championing our cause in the Halls of Congress. In the weeks ahead, the bills will be introduced, so watch for announcements in the *Monitor* and otherwise. Already, Congressman Philip Burton (Democrat of

California) has introduced the minimum wage legislation in the House of Representatives. The bill is HR 852. All members of the House should be encouraged to co-sponsor this bill and to work with us as the other bills get underway. Likewise, members of the Senate should be urged to contact us to express their interest in joining with us to lead or advance the legislative effort in these areas. The times are, indeed, times of change, but there is certainly no reason for despair, for we have only ourselves to blame if we fail to meet the challenge.

LEGISLATIVE MEMORANDUM

FROM: Members of the National Federation of the Blind
TO: Members of the Ninety-Seventh Congress
RE: The blind: A status report and legislative solutions

Nearly one-half million people in the United States are blind; we do not see, or we do not see very well, but for most of us the lack of eyesight has not been the principal obstacle. As much as any other group of citizens, we want to shoulder our share of the burden by contributing to the growth of our nation's economy, and most of us have the capacity (not merely the desire) to do this; several thousand of us are already at work and proving ourselves every day.

The rest of us have been side-tracked, and as the economic times grow harder, our prospects for an equal chance to be part of the productive life of our communities continue to diminish. The best statistics we can gather show that only about 30,000 blind people have jobs which pay them more than \$458.00 per month, just enough to lose all of their Social Security benefits

but sometimes not enough to live on. Most blind people are not able to find work, but when they do, they may often be channeled into jobs far beneath their skills and potentials, such as working at below poverty level wages in sheltered workshops. Few blind people own their own businesses. About 4,000 participate in a special governmentally sponsored program, providing opportunities for them to manage vending facilities on federal and other property.

Most blind people have only their Social Security or Supplemental Security Income checks to meet regular daily living expenses, yet many could be self-sufficient and productive if given the opportunity to do so. The National Federation of the Blind is actively working to alter or remove the various social conditions and attitudes which have historically prevented the blind from becoming full partners in business and industry; much of the job is educational, and some progress can be made through special initiatives, such as our federally assisted job opportunities project, but certain legal barriers remain in our path, requiring action by Congress. These are mentioned

below and discussed in more detail in the accompanying fact sheets. Each proposal addresses an identified problem with an appropriate legislative solution, and in each case, federal legislation represents the only viable option available.

(1) *Wage Protection for Low Income Blind Workers:* The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) contains an exemption which applies to blind workers, allowing pay rates to be as low as 25% of the federal minimum wage. The exemption arrangement was enacted in 1938 as part of the original law, and it was only modified slightly fifteen years ago. Excluding blind workers from minimum wage protection denies thousands the chance to be paid a wage which barely compensates them for their productive efforts. One out of every seven blind people who have jobs is employed by a sheltered workshop where the FLSA exemptions are most commonly in effect. Wages for these workers could be improved by providing them with the minimum wage protection available to others throughout our industrial economy. A legislative proposal and a detailed explanation of the need for it will be found in the accompanying fact sheet on "Minimum Wage for the Blind."

(2) *The Problem of Discrimination:* Despite all of the efforts we are making to change public attitudes, the image of the helpless, dependent blind is still wide-spread in our culture. This has resulted in limiting substantially our opportunities for competitive employment, and laws must be enacted to prevent these unjustified restrictions, wherever possible. In some states the laws which prohibit employment discrimination against women and minorities have also been amended to include protection for disabled persons, and the results have shown that public policy against discrimination on the basis of handicap can expand employ-

ment possibilities while reducing the burden on our welfare system. The federal legislation in this area is limited and largely ineffective, but Congress could act to insure equal employment opportunity for the blind and handicapped persons. The best way to do this is by amending Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 along the lines of bills introduced in the Senate and House during the 96th Congress. This legislation and the need for it are described further in the accompanying fact sheet on "Employment Discrimination Against the Blind."

(3) *Social Security and Work Incentives:* 120,000 blind people derive their principal income from the Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) program which includes monthly cash benefits and medicare coverage for certain beneficiaries. The concept of Social Security replacing earnings which are lost because of a disability such as blindness has merit, but our present SSDI program remains committed to the philosophy of helping only those beneficiaries who do not work and denying a hand up to those who want to achieve self-sufficiency again. This philosophy operates by means of an arbitrarily imposed earnings limitation which has the inevitable and undesirable effect of stifling the initiative of thousands of potentially productive blind citizens. A legislative solution, calling for specific changes in Title II of the Social Security Act has enjoyed bi-partisan support in past Congresses and several amendments to provide more work incentive for the blind have actually become law; the most recent of these being part of the 1977 Social Security amendments. A more detailed discussion of proposed legislation to alleviate the work incentive problems caused by disability insurance will be found in the accompanying fact sheet on "Improved Disability Insurance for the Blind."

Blind people are asking for your help in

gathering support for legislation in the areas outlined above. As this session of Congress proceeds, we anticipate introduction of appropriate bills, and we ask that you join those who will support each element of our three-pronged attack upon the most pressing economic and social problems facing the blind. Many priorities confront the 97th Congress, but none is more important than putting America back to work again, and the blind must not be overlooked in fashioning the best possible legislative program to do the job.

**For more information
please contact:**

**James Gashel
Director, Governmental Affairs
National Federation of the Blind
1800 Johnson Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21230
(301) 659-9314**

FACT SHEET

MINIMUM WAGE FOR THE BLIND

97th CONGRESS: H.R. 852—PURPOSE:
To extend to blind and visually impaired citizens the coverage of the minimum wage and overtime pay provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY: H.R. 852 (a bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to provide that blind persons may not be employed at less than the applicable minimum wage under that Act) has been introduced by Honorable Philip Burton of California. Identical bills have been introduced in the 95th and 96th Congresses, and four days of hearings have been held by the subcommittee on Labor Standards of the House Committee on Education and Labor. These hearings have sparked

a serious reassessment of present law and policy.

As a part of this review, the Secretary of Labor initiated a rule-making proceeding and held administrative hearings in mid-1979. One year later, in May, 1980, the administrative review was concluded with the finding that the Department of Labor lacks sufficient authority to establish a minimum wage requirement on behalf of blind workers. At the same time, however, the Department of Labor did express a desire to work toward some resolution of this problem for blind persons by invoking "experimental" authority to order certain wage increases under the FLSA. DOL's experiment (which involves ordering employers to raise wages for certain blind workers over a four year period to achieve full minimum wage) has not even begun at this point, and there is no assurance that the "experiment" will ever start or be completed. In short, a legislative solution is required.

Early last year the General Accounting Office (GAO) commenced a large-scale review of the so-called sheltered workshops which receive the principal advantage of subminimum wages. The GAO review is nearly complete, and a report is expected in mid-February.

PRESENT LAW AND REGULATION:
Section 14(c) of the FLSA permits subminimum wage payments to handicapped workers and authorizes the Secretary of Labor to promulgate regulations and to establish certification procedures under which subminimum wages may be paid. Any employer, (including a sheltered workshop) may pay handicapped employees subminimum wages after submitting for approval by the Department of Labor a request for an exemption.

Labor Department regulations allow the subminimum wages to go as low as 25% of the statutory minimum wage. Exemption

certificates are issued to set the subminimum pay rate applicable to the work force of a sheltered workshop, but individual certificates (providing for even lower rates of pay) may be secured.

BACKGROUND DATA: A study released by the U.S. Department of Labor in March, 1979, reported that there were 6,196 "visually impaired" workers in more than 100 sheltered workshops. There are an estimated 900 blind employees in competitive industry receiving subminimum wages, but exact data is not available. Exemption certificates show that many workers earn less than \$1 an hour—and some get only carfare—without fringe benefits or job security. Half of the blind workers were paid less than \$1,500 according to the 1979 Labor Department report. Administrators of the workshops, by contrast, often receive salaries in the \$50,000 range, with substantial benefits.

One hundred sheltered workshops for the blind are part of a nationwide system known as National Industries for the Blind (NIB). NIB (a private organization) allocates federal government and other contracts to the workshops and receives in return a percentage (ranging from 4% to 10%) of the gross sales on those contracts. It employs approximately 60 people nationally (reportedly none of whom are blind, many being former military executives who receive substantial retirement pensions) with annual expenditures of two million dollars for salaries and other expenses.

REASONS TO ADOPT: Blind people should not be excluded from our long-established national policy of minimum wage protection for American workers. The justification which has been used for denying wage protection for blind workers is the presumption that productivity is lower among the blind than other workers, but the facts are to the contrary. Almost all

blind people who work in private industry are paid the minimum wage or above, and approximately 20 sheltered workshops for the blind guarantee their blind employees at least the minimum wage. The question should be asked, why are other workshops not required to protect the wages of blind workers?

Inefficient management, substandard equipment, and poor production methods are at the heart of the problem. The blind should no longer be forced to suffer the injustice of subminimum wages in order to subsidize inefficiency and substandard conditions. Thoroughly tried and tested business practices commonly in use in industry today can improve productivity and increase business volume for the workshops. Business and industry have demonstrated the capacity to improve wages and working conditions for American workers, and there is no reason to expect that the managers of sheltered workshops could not do the same for the blind.

Blind workers are productive. During FY 1979, the 5,350 blind people who worked in the NIB system generated \$127,267,416 in gross sales. But these blind workers were not paid an equitable amount in comparison to their productivity—salaries and fringe benefits amounted to \$24,143,756, or 18.9% of the gross sales. In competitive employment it is customary for salaries and fringe benefits paid to production workers to be in the range of 23.4% to 28% of gross sales or even more.

The workshops argue that they cannot increase the wages of the blind but there are plenty of facts which do not support their assertion. Surveys of balance sheets for several agencies which operate workshops show sufficient capital is available. The Industrial Home for the Blind (IHB) which operates three sheltered plants in the New York City area reported net worth of

\$13,689,655 at the end of 1976. In 1978 IHB produced revenue of \$3,754,827 from its sales activities yet blind workers were only paid \$360,000, less than 10% for their labors. In 1977, the Jewish Guild for the Blind, also operating workshops in New York City, had excess income over expenses of nearly one million dollars, which brought the organization's net worth to \$25,640,251 at the beginning of 1978. The New York Association for the Blind started 1977 with \$55,264,654 in net worth, but by the end of the year there had been an increase of \$2,156,574.

Elsewhere in the country, the San Francisco Lighthouse, already worth \$6,354,747, ended 1977 with an increase of \$449,148. This agency has now gone to minimum wage for all blind workers. In Washington, D.C., the Columbia Lighthouse for the Blind was worth \$2,229,998 as it started 1977, and this was up from \$1,662,507 at the beginning of the previous year. In Cincinnati, the Clovernook Home and School for the Blind (which also operates a sheltered workshop) boosted its net worth by \$224,534 during 1977, reaching a total of \$7,945,877 at the end of that year. Looking at the broader picture, a random sample check of fund balance sheets from 36 workshops (1/3 of the NIB system) shows that 77% of them had excess income over expenses during 1977.

It is contended that the removal of sub-minimum wages for the blind will be harmful since blind persons who receive higher wages will lose Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits. This is not necessarily the case. The SSI eligibility rules for the blind permit earnings well above the minimum wage before benefits are suspended or even reduced. The SSDI rules are somewhat more restrictive, but any blind person is permitted to earn \$5,500

during 1981 before SSDI benefits are terminated, and this rate is higher than the average wage which workers receive in the NIB system. Most importantly, the decision to earn one's daily bread is a matter of individual choice, and no employer should be permitted to limit a worker's earnings simply because the employee has access to other income. The blind have decided that it is better to earn a living than to live off of the earnings of others, and this decision should command the respect of all.

FACT SHEET

EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION AGAINST THE BLIND

BACKGROUND: Despite expenditures of nearly one billion dollars annually for the State/federal vocational rehabilitation program, most blind people remain substantially unemployed or underemployed. Social Security data indicates that approximately 30,000 blind people have jobs which pay them gross wages in excess of \$458 per month, just enough not to receive Social Security Disability Insurance benefits. The problem is discrimination, not any general incapacity for work among the blind. Myths, misconceptions, and lack of accurate information about blindness caused this discrimination, leading employers to make typical statements such as the following: "I'd like to hire a blind person, I really would, but we have a factory here, and there's really nothing they can do—but you understand, I know how capable they are; I wish I could help." These phrases are the most common manifestations of the deep-seated prejudices, fears, and doubts about the ability of blind people to work productively; this is the essence of discrimination, coupled with kindness and charity.

PRESENT LAW: Discrimination against blind persons in employment is often poorly or not at all addressed by federal and State laws. While some legislation to prohibit employment discrimination does exist, the results so far have been a patch-work system containing diverse and often conflicting policies and regulations. Employers are confused, and so are the blind who seek opportunities.

The first laws (commonly known as "White Cane Laws") came to the State level, and these are ordinarily based on a model developed by the National Federation of the Blind more than a decade ago. The next advancement occurred when several States passed laws concerning handicapped people along with the other minorities and women protected by civil rights statutes. In 1973 the Congress entered into the picture by including three provisions related to employment discrimination against handicapped persons in the Rehabilitation Act. These are Section 501 (requiring federal agencies to establish affirmative action programs for handicapped applicants and employees), and Section 504 (prohibiting all forms of discrimination against handicapped persons by recipients of federal financial assistance and in federal programs). In 1978 the Congress took further action to strengthen these anti-discrimination laws by specifying that the rights and remedies under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 would also be available to victims of discrimination prohibited by the Rehabilitation Act.

These federal and State laws are important but limited in scope and effectiveness, and so far enforcement has often been slow; nor is there a single agency in the government to oversee enforcement of these laws—the system is complex and bureaucratic. For example, the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) in

the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) is responsible for enforcing the Affirmative Action requirements which cover federal contractors, while every other federal agency which extends federal financial assistance also maintains authority to enforce anti-discrimination regulations which cover employment practices of federally assisted programs and activities. This system is bewildering to persons having legitimate claims of employment discrimination—which federal agency has jurisdiction; that is the question. Furthermore, the thousands of employers who engage in interstate commerce but do not operate under federal contracts or receive federal grants are generally not covered by the current constellation of laws, thus there is no clear remedy available when discrimination occurs.

NEED FOR LEGISLATION: Enactment of equal employment opportunity legislation to protect the blind and other handicapped persons from employment discrimination is essential in order to insure that these potentially productive citizens will be able to contribute their talents and energies as equal partners in our nation's work force. The principal objective should be to establish a firm legislative mandate against employment discrimination which places potentially employable and independent citizens among the ranks of the unemployed and dependent, leaving them at the mercy of our nation's welfare and social services systems.

The present laws prohibiting discrimination on the basis of handicap offer inadequate protection against employment discrimination, and often, although business and industry have a strong desire to cooperate, the requirements of both federal and State agencies conflict to such an extent that their expectations are confusing and contradictory. Moreover, most work situations are not covered at all by federal

or State laws. For example Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act extends to approximately 300,000 federal contractors and subcontractors, whereas more than 700,000 employers, operating in the private sector without federal contracts, remain substantially free from any obligation to avoid discrimination against blind and handicapped persons. Compounding the problem, recent court rulings have held that Congress did not intend to prohibit employment discrimination against the handicapped when it enacted Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, which requires that federal programs and federally assisted programs operate without discrimination on the basis of handicap.

In short, under current law; there is no generally applicable prohibition against employment discrimination on the basis of handicapping condition. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits employment discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin; but it provides no protection for disabled workers. The blind as a group have long worked to gain the status of equality and to organize public assistance and rehabilitation programs which are directed toward offering a hand up to productive employment, not merely a handout along with meaningless exercise. The Congressional Budget Office has estimated that the cost of enacting equal employment opportunity legislation in this area would not be significant, with only a modest increase in expenditures of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) for compliance enforcement activities.

PROPOSED LEGISLATION: Although support has been building for legislation to provide protection against employment discrimination for the blind and handicapped, the most significant steps were taken in the 96th Congress. Of special importance was

introduction of companion bills in the Senate and House—S. 446 by Senator Harrison Williams, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources and H.R. 7423 by Representative Paul Simon, Chairman of the Subcommittee on Select Education of the House Committee on Education and Labor. Each bill attracted a significant number of co-sponsors representing points of view on both sides of the aisle. These bills were entitled "The Equal Employment Opportunity for the Handicapped Act of 1979," and they each would amend Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 by adding protection for persons with "handicapping conditions." A definition of "handicapping conditions" is also included.

During the first session of the 96th Congress the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources conducted hearings on S. 446 and favorably reported the bill on August 1, 1979; however, neither body took final action as the 96th Congress came to a close.

FACT SHEET

IMPROVED DISABILITY INSURANCE FOR THE BLIND

A bill to amend Title II of the Social Security Act so as to liberalize the conditions governing eligibility of blind persons to receive disability insurance benefits thereunder.

HISTORY: The Disability Insurance for the Blind bill, which has passed the Senate seven times, was first offered in the 88th Congress by Senator Hubert Humphrey. Senator Vance Hartke introduced the bill in the 90th Congress whereby the House-Senate Conference on Social Security matters made the generally accepted definition of blindness (20/200 etc.) the standard for visual loss under the Disability Insurance

program. Offered again in the 91st Congress, the Committee on Ways and Means adopted a portion of the proposed Disability Insurance for the Blind bill removing the "five out of the last ten years" work requirement which had previously applied to the blind and disabled alike, making 30,000 otherwise ineligible blind persons eligible for Social Security disability benefits. Subsequent to this, the bill passed the Senate several times in succeeding Congresses, and in the 95th another step toward full enactment was taken when the Substantial Gainful Activity Test (earnings limitation) for blind Disability Insurance beneficiaries was established by law at the monthly dollar amount which persons who retire at age 65 are permitted to earn without decreasing their retirement benefits.

PROVISIONS: (1) Allows qualification for disability benefits to the person who is blind, according to the generally accepted definition of blindness (20/200 etc.) and who has worked six quarters in Social Security-covered works.

(2) Continues payment of benefits irrespective of earnings so long as blindness lasts, rather than cutting off benefits if the blind person earns as little as \$458.00 in a month, as provided in existing law.

REASONS FOR ADOPTION: (1) Reducing the work requirement is more equitable for blind persons since because of employer reluctance to hire them, the blind often cannot accumulate the necessary quarters of coverage. They are victims of the last hired, first fired syndrome.

(2) Present law keeps blind people and those who become blind out of the work force. Blind persons who seek work do so at the risk of economic disaster since their wages are often less than their disability benefits, and there is no certainty that their employment will continue. Many do not work as a result.

(3) Severe economic consequences accompany blindness. Earning power is usually cut in half, and wages must go for hiring readers, drivers, or for purchasing costly devices. The blind did not create the negative attitudes of employers which keep them from responsible, better paying jobs; but through their lost wages, they pay for this second-class treatment. The costs of blindness should be spread across society as a whole.

(4) Reduction in welfare payments to the blind would occur if this proposal is adopted. After adoption of this measure, most blind people eligible for SSI and other welfare payments would eventually transfer to this new program. Seventy-five thousand blind people would likely become ineligible for SSI, thus there would be a cost savings to general revenues.

ISSUES AND RESPONSES

ISSUE: Cost

Congressional Budget Office most recent estimate: \$310 million, first year, \$760 million, fifth year; Social Security Administration: twice the amount of the CBO estimates.

RESPONSE: The cost estimates provided so far are questionable on several counts, primarily in their failure to understand the blind population. A more thorough investigation of this group would result in substantially lower cost figures. Consider the following analysis: There are about 475,000 legally blind persons (and this number remains stable). Half of these are over age 65. Thirty-one thousand of the remainder are children (under age 18). Of the remaining 206,500 working age blind, 166,00 are already receiving either disability insurance payments or SSI, and therefore they would not be new beneficiaries with

adoption of this bill. (These are blind persons, who if they are working, are earning less than \$458.00 per month.) Because of other circumstances (for example, blind people who have sighted, working spouses), probably another 10,000 of the remaining 40,500 would also continue to be ineligible for disability benefits. This leaves only 30,500 blind persons who are working and earning more than \$458.00 per month, and these people would be the potential new beneficiaries.

The most important provision of this bill is to remove the earnings limit. This would provide the greatest possible work incentive for 166,000 blind persons who are now receiving Disability Insurance and SSI payments. These people will be stimulated to join the labor force (and thus begin paying into general revenues and the Social Security trust fund). This income (which has not been estimated by Social Security) would reduce the already low cost of this bill.

ISSUE: "This is a good thing for the blind; but if we adopt this provision for them, we will have to adopt it later for all the disabled; and the system cannot afford that."

RESPONSE: Laws should focus on the unique problems which people have; and the barriers the blind face are more specifically economic than the barriers facing other disability groups. Other groups have major problems with architectural or other physical barriers, or frequently a physical

or mental inability to compete at all in the job market. The blind are able to work, and can compete in most jobs on an equal basis with the sighted. But they are prevented from doing so by negative employer attitudes. A Gallup poll showed that Americans fear blindness more than any other handicap, and this means that the blind—although the most able of the handicapped groups to hold jobs—are the last to be hired and the first to be fired. In addition, the costs incidental to working (such as readers, drivers, or technical devices to replace sight), added to the uniformly lower wages the blind are paid, often make it economically unfeasible for the blind to go to work. Other disability groups have far more pressing problems than this economic disincentive (problems requiring different kinds of solutions); but this bill will help to remove the major barriers the blind of this nation face, and will allow them to join the mainstream of our economic and social life. It is a very specific solution to a specific problem facing the blind.

**For more information
please contact:**

**James Gashel
Director, Governmental Affairs
National Federation of the Blind
1800 Johnson Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21230
(301) 659-9314**

A THANKSGIVING MESSAGE AND A POSTSCRIPT: FROM TENNESSEE TO THE A.C.B.

by JAMES CASHEL

In the *Braille Monitor* of November, 1980, we described occurrences in Tennessee involving the state's vending facility program and the relationship between the state agency which runs the program, known as Tennessee Business Enterprises, and the blind vendors who operate businesses under its control. We also reprinted a letter from Curtis Shepherd, President of the Tennessee Blind Vendors Association and National Legislative Chairman of the Randolph-Sheppard Vendors of America (RSVA). The Tennessee developments have far reaching and profound implications, and the impact of what has occurred will likely not end solely with the immediate and tangible victory we have now achieved in reforming Tennessee's vending facility rules. The Tennessee experience underscores not only the difference in terms of relative strength everybody knows exists between the Federation and the American Council of the Blind (ACB), but it also shows that we have a fundamentally different orientation toward the system of social service and rehabilitation agencies which often control the lives of blind people. We have often observed: "The proof of a thing is, does it work?" Whatever else there is to be learned so far out of Tennessee we know that the Council and its front group of Randolph-Sheppard Vendors do not or cannot work—that is, they have proven conclusively that they were simply unable to deal constructively with the problems which blind vendors in Tennessee were facing.

On November 27, 1980 (Thanksgiving Day), Curtis Shepherd wrote once again to Ione Miller, National President of the Randolph-Sheppard Vendors of America to give

some firsthand and personal testimony as to how RSVA and the Council did not work for the blind of Tennessee. His letter is reprinted below, along with one written a few days later (December 1, 1980) from Betty Sue Shepherd (Curtis's wife) who was, until her letter, a National Board Member of another ACB front group known as the National Association of Blind Teachers (NABT). These letters from Curtis and Betty Sue Shepherd tell it like it is and lay it on the line. As you read them, you will want to remember that, at the time when the Tennessee problems were developing and the Tennessee vendors searched in despair for assistance from their own state ACB affiliate (not to mention their many unreturned phone calls to Durward McDaniel, National Representative for ACB in Washington), the President of the Council's affiliate in Tennessee was Otis Stephens, one of the biggest NACsters of them all. You will also remember that this same Otis Stephens, being the NACster that he is, had his own solution to the problems of the Tennessee vendors which was (apparently without shame or discomfort) to call upon the National Federation of the Blind to join with him in convincing the vendors that they ought to settle down. We didn't, and they didn't, and the results are now part of our history of continuing victories on behalf of all blind people.

Here are the letters from Curtis and Betty Sue Shepherd. Indeed, we can give thanks for the organization we have built, as well as people such as these, who are experiencing for the first time the benefits of working in concert with other blind people who, through the Federation, are seeking nothing

nothing more than first-class status and equal opportunity for the blind.

November 27, 1980

Dear Ione:

Betty Sue and I have returned home from spending this Thanksgiving Day with my brother, his wife, their little son, and other relatives. It has been a pleasant day for all of us. With my personal faith in the Lordship of Jesus Christ, I am deeply thankful for my salvation, my wife, our free nation and I am very thankful for my job and various daily blessings. Included among those blessings, admittedly, is the help our Tennessee Committee of Blind Vendors has received from the National Federation of the Blind. A lot of things have happened since the Louisville Convention this past July, and I am now compelled to share some of them with you.

As you know, the Blind Vendors Committee has struggled since its beginning to play its federally mandated role with the S.L.A. (State Licensing Agency, Tennessee Business Enterprises) in Tennessee. We have endured many hardships and numerous legal battles. Small strides forward were made, but those of us on the Committee concerned about its true role recognized that we needed expert help. We anticipated getting that help in the person of Mr. Durward K. McDaniel. We were at first hurt that he did not seem willing to actively help us, and have now become informed that he could not help us because of his role of friendship with Mr. Pinkney C. Seale (former state agency Director). To be perfectly candid, some of us were actually afraid to receive help offered by the National Federation of the Blind because we had always been ad-

vised by the A.C.B. that they are such an obnoxious outfit. However, the majority of the Tennessee Committee staked their seats and their reputations on the line, and voted to receive the offer by Mr. James Gashel on behalf of the Federation to assist us in our battles. They have gone to untold expense to aid us, and have done so very successfully. Just one week ago today, Mr. Milton Bolton conveyed to me, by phone, that the Department has accepted in full the work of the Sub-Committees from the State Licensing Agency and from the Blind Vendors Committee. This is only phase one (in revising the Tennessee Vending Facility Rules), and the Federation is pledged to assist us through phase two, and the promulgation of both. Many of us in our volunteer state have discussed the help of the Federation, but that they truly appreciate the dedicated and effective efforts of the N.F.B. True, there are a few that still think that it is the worst thing that has ever happened, but they are a small minority. Even some members of the State Licensing Agency now speak of the Committee with awe and respect. Mr. Bolton has made concrete personal commitments to me that as long as he has a voice, the Committee will play its participatory role with the Agency. The Federation has not operated in an unbecoming manner, but has performed intelligently, working with various members of State and Federal Government to apply appropriate but ethical pressure on the Department and State Licensing Agency to insure cooperation and participation by the Agency with the Committee. So, you see, I have reason to be thankful.

On the other hand, Ione, I have been saddened by a number of things I have learned, factually, about the A.C.B. Mr. LeRoy Saunders was our Banquet Speaker

at the Tennessee Council of the Blind Convention just one year ago this past Labor Day weekend. I have had admiration and respect for him, but upon learning how he and others supportive of A.C.B. maneuvered to have a staged opposition luncheon right in the hotel where the N.F.B. was holding its Annual Convention this past summer, I lost all respect for him, and began to see that some seemingly angelic leaders within the A.C.B. may be more devious than the people in the N.F.B. that they have made such harsh accusations about. We have also learned that A.C.B. made all manner of fuss about the N.F.B. attempting to take over the Minneapolis Society for the Blind. Betty Sue and I had bleeding hearts and we joined the A.C.B. Proxy drive to prevent the N.F.B. from its goal. Since then, we have heard actual accounts of people that have been clients there, and the awful way they are treated. Some of them feel that the only way things will ever be corrected at the Society is for the N.F.B. to assert itself, as it has been effectively doing in Tennessee. Furthermore, the N.F.B. allowed proper A.C.B. representatives to review their Proxy lists, but to my knowledge, to this date, the A.C.B. has not yet submitted to the Court Order to allow the N.F.B. to have the equal privilege.

Also, in the Nash case in Georgia, where the Federation has done such an effective job representing Mrs. Nash, the only two witnesses called to support the Agency against Mrs. Nash were two of our R.S.V.A. members. Has our organization become a vehicle to protect the State Licensing Agencies, rather than an association to work for the rights and best interest of deserving managers? I have observed Mr. McDaniel's unwillingness to move in behalf of managers

against the State Agency, and also, his unsuccessful attempts to get things done otherwise, such as his recent appeals case in the Federal Court.

Another deep concern is the involvement of N.A.C. (National Accreditation Council for Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Handicapped). Not knowing the real intent of N.A.C., I have supported what I believed to be its goal of updating agencies. I have now learned that it is a group of individuals attempting to place a protective fence around the agencies. This is certainly not conducive to the needs of deserving blind people who fail to receive appropriate services, or to Committees of blind vendors which know the truth about their agency.

Finally, I personally realize that I often hold a minority view among my friends on the R.S.V.A. Board, probably because I do hold more aggressive persuasions synonymous with the N.F.B. . . .

To this date, I can truthfully tell you that my wife (Betty Sue) and I have not joined the National Federation of the Blind. As you may know, she is a member of the National Board of the National Association of Blind Teachers, as well as me a member of the Board of R.S.V.A. We both cherish the friendships of those who voted us into these positions. However, we both have a higher commitment than positions or personal glory. We want to do the most for the cause of blind people, and we are willing to do that whether in roles of leadership or in humble capacities. We were recently told, indirectly, that we are not any longer considered members of the local A.C.B. affiliate. That does not really bother us, because we joined as lifetime members, and up until this time have not asked to be removed from A.C.B. What does bother us is the attitude of A.C.B. and

numerous A.C.B.er's toward the very genuine needs of blind people. For example, at a recent A.C.B. chapter meeting, a motion was made by a blind person who is not himself a vendor, that the said chapter donate \$100 toward Mr. Atchley's (a private attorney representing the Committee of Blind Vendors) legal fees for services he rendered prior to the N.F.B.'s help. Mr. John Brown, a vendor of many years, moved to table that motion. I simply ask why the Federation has spent thousands of dollars to help us, when the prevailing attitude of A.C.B. is toward supporting the Agency, rather than the blind people. Ione, I do not intend to tell you or anyone else that the N.F.B. is perfect, but Betty Sue and I have discovered that it is the organization attempting to do the most for the blind people, rather than trying to protect the Agency. You are intelligent and I respect you personally, and I am sure that by now you realize that Betty Sue and I are going to be giving up our positions on our A.C.B. affiliated Boards, and leaving the American Council of the Blind to join and work with the National Federation of the Blind. We are not shirking our responsibilities, but rather endeavoring to use our lives in the best interests of our minority people!

I am letting this letter serve as notification to you of the vacancies which my absence will create, and to let you know of our withdrawing from A.C.B. You may share this letter with anyone you wish, as I will be making copies and sharing it, too. There are many blind people who know me, and trust me, and they have a right to know what I am doing and why I am doing it. I do wish to close by reiterating that Betty Sue and I will not be joining with the N.F.B. for the purpose of hurting the people we love in

A.C.B. It is our hope that what we can do within the N.F.B. will be of help to all blind people, from coast to coast. I wish that the blind movement could be one in mind and spirit, working together to accomplish the goals and dreams of the majority of blind people, which in my mind, is to live in a country in which sightless individuals can work, live and pursue happiness side by side by normally sighted fold and not be treated as second-class citizens. Ione, you are a woman to be admired, and even though at this point we view things differently, I still hold respect and admiration for you, and I trust that Betty Sue and I will continue to receive the same from you and our other friends. However, if we do not, I do know that God on high knows the desire of our hearts, and I believe history will be candid with our intent and efforts to work toward a freer America for every blind man, woman, boy and girl living within the borders of our great Homeland. So long and may God bless you!

Respectfully,
Curtis M. Shepherd

December 1, 1980

Mrs. Edna Schmidt, President
National Association of Blind Teachers

Dear Edna:

First, let me thank you for your invitation to attend the Semi-Annual Board Meeting of the N.A.B.T. I do wish to advise you that I will not be able to attend, for various reasons including my schedule.

Second, though, there are other reasons which would preclude that I not attend, even if my schedule allowed for it. Through

the vendors of Tennessee and their Committee of Blind Vendors, I have had an opportunity to observe the National Federation of the Blind in operation. I have also visited their headquarters in Baltimore, along with my husband. I have had opportunity to learn more about their Blind Teachers Division, and now feel that the American Council of the Blind and their National Association of Blind Teachers are not as progressive in their movement as the N.F.B. Therefore, it would be unfair to both A.C.B. and N.A.B.T., as well as to me, for me to remain affiliated with organizations that are not attempting to do the maximum for the blind. I am of a personal persuasion that blind people need an organization that is willing to actively assert itself in order to bring about needed changes for the visually impaired of our country. Even as a student teacher I have already observed problems imposed on a sightless teacher when they try to function in a world of sight. I understand that folk al-

ready in the profession endure many difficulties, mainly because there is not a supporting organization willing to enforce existing laws, and seek progressive change. But, my concern extends to all blind individuals, and I want to be a part of a movement that is sensitive to the needs of all of our people, and that will work effectively towards that end.

Finally, without ill feelings toward anyone, I am submitting my resignation to N.A.B.T., and subsequently to A.C.B. so that I can join forces with the committed blind people working with the N.F.B. to try to make America a better place in which to live, work and enjoy the pursuit of happiness. I shall always remember my friends I have met through A.C.B., because I am not joining the N.F.B. for the purposes of fighting the A.C.B., but rather to work constructively for the cause of all blind people.

Sincerely,
Betty Sue Shepherd

OF ELEGANT ELEPHANTS AND OTHER MATTERS CONCERNING THE JACOBUS tenBROEK MEMORIAL FUND

From Lawrence (Muzzy) Marcelino
3315 Cabrillo Street
San Francisco, California

Dear Fellow Federationists:

Half a year has passed since our great 1980 Convention was adjourned. Prior to adjournment the Honor Roll Call of States was held in accordance with the tradition and custom of several years past. Affiliates and chapters are here reminded of their respective pledges. We respectfully request the affiliates to fulfill their pledges as soon as possible if they have not already done so.

Make checks payable to: tenBroek Memorial Fund, 1800 Johnson Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21230. Please do *not* make checks payable to the National Federation of the Blind or put the Federation's name on the checks. These are not donations to the Federation but to the tenBroek Fund.

At our 1981 annual convention not only will the Honor Roll of States be called for contributions and pledges to the tenBroek Memorial Fund but a very *Elegant* Elephant Sale will once again be held. Federationists are urged to bring all of the truly Elegant Elephants that they can carry. Please do

not bring junk! Bring articles that people will want to buy.

It would be most helpful if you would label your articles (notice that I used the plural—not the singular—for we want many) and declare the reasonable price that each should bear.

Mrs. Joy Smith, President of the Santa Barbara Chapter, has consented once again

to serve as Sales Manager. Federationists are asked to volunteer their services as sales persons when the exhibit room is open. If you are willing to respond to this appeal for your services as sales persons please write or telephone: Mrs. Joy Smith, 707 La Roda Avenue, Santa Barbara, California 93111, (805) 967-7442.

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

by RAMONA WALHOF

HAMBURGER STROGANOFF

Ingredients:

1 pound ground beef
1 medium onion
¼ green pepper
1 can cream of mushroom soup
1 small can mushrooms

Brown the onion and the ground beef in a skillet. Salt and pepper to taste. Then drain off any excess grease. Add the mushroom soup and diced pepper. Simmer ten minutes. Add the mushrooms. Serve over rice or noodles. Add one large dollop of sour cream to each plate when served. For a crowd, double or triple. (Simple and tasty.)

MONITOR MINIATURES □ □ □ □ □

□ From Jim Schaffer
8512 Remington Lane
Austin, TX

Dear Fellow Federationists,

A Monitor Miniature appeared in the September 1980 *Braille Monitor* in which I asked about showing in AKC (American Kennel Club) obedience trails. I want to express my appreciation to those who called or wrote about this. I did get a copy of the

AKC rules and they are specific on the subject of handicapped handlers.

The AKC obedience regulations state that handicapped handlers who can move about the ring without special assistance, except during the group exercises, shall be allowed to compete. They go on to state that a dog shown by such a handler shall complete all the required parts for that class and shall be penalized for not doing so, just as anyone else would be.

I found that I was treated as an equal as far as judging and scoring was concerned.

It seems that so often we expect a battle when none is necessary, and, if my limited experience is any guide, none is necessary here.

□ From Charles Biebl
6910 Bank Street
Baltimore, MD 21224

Please tell your readers that if any of them would like to receive the entire Braille Bible, King James version, Grade 2 Braille, they should write to me in Braille and request what they want—the entire Braille Bible, or Bible parts (either New or Old Testament). These books will be sent free of charge and will probably arrive a few volumes at a time, not all at once. Nobody will be refused.

□ From John Knall, President
NFB of Cleveland

Glenn H. Hoffman, Cleveland, Ohio, last surviving blind founder of the NFB died on January 7th of this year, after breaking his hip. He was 91.

He founded the Mutual Federation of the Blind of Ohio in 1937 and was present at the founding of the NFB in 1940 at Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. He served on the Executive Board of the Federation in the early years. Glenn was involved and active in organizations of the blind since 1906.

□ The baby boom continues. On January 28, 1981 (allegedly at 11:00 in the morning), Joanne Fernandes gave birth to a baby boy. As most Federationists know, Joseph and Joanne Fernandes live in Louisiana.

The baby was delivered by Dr. Spencer Lewis, who is the blind physician we have been defending in his battle with the Louisiana State Medical Licensing Board, which made efforts to revoke his license several times last year because of his blindness. Both Dr. Lewis and his patients seem to be happy with his performance. By their actions Joseph and Joanne Fernandes give irrefutable evidence that they believe what they have been saying about the competence of Dr. Lewis. At the critical time they put the life and health of Joanne and the baby on the line. Their actions speak with even more force than their words. At last report both mother and baby were doing well.

□ NFB of North Dakota state president, Donna Sorenson married John Hemp January 10, 1981. (In Presidential Release #64 we incorrectly reported the name as "Kemp.") The Hems are making their home in Rugby, North Dakota.

□ Other recent weddings should be reported: Fred Schroeder and Cathy Nusser were recently married and have moved from Nebraska to New Mexico, where Fred is teaching. Gary Doty (President of our Lincoln, Nebraska, Chapter) and Jane Carlson were recently married. Late in December Dan Duffy, who was President of the NFB of Arizona, and Sharon Monthei, who teaches at the Iowa Commission for the Blind, were married. They are making their home in Des Moines. Jim Carlock is now President of the NFB of Arizona.

